

Beautiful Mrs. Thorndyke.

By MRS. POULTNEY BIGELOW.

COMPLETE

JUNE, 1888

LIPPINCOTT'S

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BEAUTIFUL MRS. THORNDYKE.

A NOVEL.

BY

EDITH EVELYN BIGELOW.

PHILADELPHIA:

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LIPPINCOTT'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

JUNE, 1888.

BEAUTIFUL MRS. THORNDYKE.

CHAPTER I.

AMERICANS are eminently gregarious, and show this quality in their choice of dwellings. If any one doubts this statement, let him recall all that he has seen of the places easy of access to New York; the sea-side resorts where the houses stand in long continuous lines on the shore; where everybody knows just who is visiting everybody else, and what they will all have for dinner; where it is unsafe to dress of a morning without a great lowering of blinds and furtive glances in order to ascertain who is regarding one from the walk along the bluff, or the contiguous—the *very* contiguous—piazza of a neighbor's house.

Somehow, an Englishman appears to object to having strangers peering into his windows. He buys himself—if he chance not to belong to that favored class which find everything ready-made for them—several acres at least, and surrounds them with a brick wall ten feet high, crowned with inhospitable broken bottles or still more uninviting iron spikes. Exclusiveness seems to him a part of aristocracy. The lower classes may inhabit tidy little suburban cottages and semi-detached villas, with names long enough to reach from attic to cellar if placed perpendicularly, but the well-bred Briton, the country gentleman, the man with a rent-roll and an undisputed right to a coat of arms, cannot and will not bear the vulgar gaze, and shuts himself out of sight as best he may.

The average American, by reason of his press of business cares, must needs live near a railway-station if he reside "out of town." The greatest recommendation contained in an advertisement of a country-house is the alluring assertion that it is "five minutes' walk from the station."

One often sees a twenty-thousand-dollar "Queen Anne" mansion

standing on a plot of ground not large enough to accommodate a moderate-sized kitchen-garden. The houses on both sides seem to be elbowing it. The inmates of one dwelling can sit on the piazza and hear what is being said by the persons on the balcony next door.

Next to the desire for easy access to trains, probably the servant question furnishes the real reason for this gregariousness.

That question alone would fill a volume if properly discussed and treated even from the individual stand-point of one who has suffered much in trying to solve the problem. Who has not heard complaints from their domestics about the "loneliness" of most localities? The distance from church is another fruitful source of discontent.

As every day it becomes more difficult for the luckless American housekeeper to obtain or retain reliable servants, she is glad enough, doubtless, to fly to one of these suburban communities, where the "help" can find companions to rob the place of its loneliness and induce them to stay.

All this is by way of introduction to the statement that in one of these semi-detached houses, in a row with many more, in the State of New Jersey, not a long way from the line of ferry-boats which connects the provincial barbarians with the metropolis, lived Mrs. Hilton, a widow, with two daughters. She had not always lived in New Jersey, as she sometimes remarked with a good deal of plaintiveness. It was not five years since she had resided in a fashionable street in New York, and gone into society, if not the best at least the next best, and who knows which either of those really is?

The cause of her removal from the pomp and circumstance of a brown-stone front to a yellow-and-red bay-windowed cottage in a neighboring State was not the all-agitating question to which we have alluded; neither was it a wish to be near a railway-station. It was simply the fact that her husband, an apparently thriving stock-broker, had suddenly been ruined, and had died of chagrin and alcohol shortly after.

Mrs. Hilton found herself bereft of all fortune save a few thousands which had been settled on her at the time of her marriage. Her daughters, girls of respectively twenty and twenty-two years of age, had been accustomed to appear and consider themselves rich, even if they had never been so, and the calamity fell heavily upon them. Jessica, the elder, was really beautiful, clever, and quick-witted,—too much so to be a favorite with either sex,—and wonderfully useless and impracticable. Lily, the younger, was what is called "nice-looking," and had a good deal of adaptability and common sense for her years. Jessica had always ruled the house, beginning, when she was not quite a year old, to exercise that authority which is the prerogative of American childhood, and being weakly indulged by her obedient parents. She grew into an exceedingly handsome girl,—fair and fresh as a girl should be, with a wonderful red and white skin, and hair and brows of raven black.

Her proud father had given her the pet name of "Beauty," and so she continued to be called after she had attained her full growth and loveliness. The latter was at its height when our story opens.

The house which Mrs. Hilton had selected as her place of retirement and retrenchment was remarkable for nothing save its inconvenience and the largeness of rent in comparison with the money which had originally been expended on the structure. It was built in a sort of bastard Queen Anne style (how much that good sovereign has been responsible for in these latter years!), with jutting windows placed at impossible angles, and cheap catchpenny effects in latticed windows, inferior stained glass, and other adornments apparently peculiar to "Queen Anne" houses.

It certainly looked unprepossessing enough on a day in early spring, when our proverbial spring weather had left the trees still bare, and only the faintest hint of green in the withered grass. The lawn had patches of snow on it still. The road was a slough of red mud, and the creepers which mercifully draped the Queen Anne enormities in summer hung limp and dripping to the yellow wall.

Inside, things looked more attractive. There was a coal fire glowing in the grate of the front parlor. The furniture was all good and substantial and tastefully arranged. The enforced economy of the household did not manifest itself in the appearance of this room at least. That universal curse of American homes, furnace-heat, was wanting, and in consequence the atmosphere was pleasant and not enervating. There were two occupants of the parlor, Mrs. Hilton and Jessica. The former sat near the fire, in a low chair, with a work-basket beside her. A half-darned stocking lay in her lap, but her hands were folded idly above it, and her thoughts were evidently very far from her late occupation.

Jessica stood half facing the window, through which a part of the sodden, desolate lawn was visible. She held an open letter in her hand. Her eyes were fixed on the dreary prospect without. Her gown was simple and shabby,—the "rainy-day dress" of a girl whose best clothes were far from being either fresh or costly,—but she was beautiful.

Something had disturbed the quiet every-day current of their lives. That was apparent. There was a look of mingled regret and defiance on the face of the younger woman, and an expression of anxiety on that of the elder.

"You are quite sure you *could* not do it?" Mrs. Hilton said, with a kind of plaintive insistence. She was a small, unobtrusive lady in black, with a voice which easily attuned itself to a minor key; yet she was not destitute of a sort of modest perseverance, and there was that in her tone which would have convinced any auditor that this was not the first time that she had asked the question.

"You are *quite* sure, Jessica?"

"Quite sure," said the girl, almost sharply.

"It is giving up a great deal, dear. Do you realize that?"

"A great deal of unhappiness, mamma."

"That you only suppose. You can't be sure."

Jessica made a gesture indicative of impatience.

"I am just as sure as—as I can be," she said, ending rather weakly.

"Ah, yes, but no surer," said Mrs. Hilton, nodding her head wisely.

"I begged you," broke out Jessica, turning her back to the window, and facing her mother, "I begged you not to have any hopes of it ever coming about. I never meant to marry him. I kept him from asking me for a year. He can't say I haven't been honest with him."

Mrs. Hilton sighed softly.

"Have you any new objections to him, Beauty?"

"Only the old one."

"Perhaps you are over-sensitive, love. You certainly like Mr. Thorndyke as well as you do anybody."

Jessica colored a little.

"I don't think I do," she said, bluntly.

"Oh!" said Mrs. Hilton, with a soft tone of surprise. She was too discreet to say more.

"I like him too well to marry him, though, mother," said Jessica, throwing herself into a chair. "He would bore me to death in a week, and he would repent of his bargain."

"I like romance in a young girl, but perhaps you don't realize how largely a happy married life is a question of butchers' bills and house-rent. I don't want to urge you unduly; but, my dear, we are *very* poor. Inconvenient as this house is, it is beyond our means. I used to be considered a good housekeeper, but I can't keep house on nothing. The servants do eat so! I suppose it's the country air. I don't grudge it to them, poor souls, but then all that tells in the monthly bills."

Mrs. Hilton's small face looked very gloomy under its neatly-parted hair.

Jessica laughed a little.

"Poor mother!" she said. "I wish a fairy prince would come along and *make* me love him, and then we would shower diamonds and gold-pieces on you! I am so useless. I feel myself only a dead weight to the family. Lily is worth twice as much as I."

And the laugh ended in a sob.

"I am almost persuaded sometimes——" she went on, and then paused, and put her hand to her eyes.

"Poor child!" cried Mrs. Hilton. "What should we do without you? Never say that you are useless."

Indeed, Mrs. Hilton and her younger daughter were contented to do the work and regard Jessica in the light of a relaxation,—their picture-gallery, their theatre, their library of wit and humor, their one means of æsthetic education. And she had hitherto been contented to "exist beautifully."

The subject of the foregoing discussion was Theodore Thorndyke, a young New York man.

He had nothing distinctive about him but his real and unselfish passion for Jessica. Vices he had none, and his virtues were negative, except the very positive one of having an unencumbered income of fifty thousand a year. He was neither very good nor very bad. He was not handsome, nor was he ugly. He was nothing but rich and in love; and to some women these two certainties would have been enough to constitute the other certainty,—that of a happy future passed in his

society. The Thorndykes came of really good stock (not railway stock, which is the only ancestor of so many New York grandees), and they were proud of their family tree. Never, however, from its branches had depended a more insipid specimen of its fruit than Jessica's suitor, Theodore.

Jessica had considered him in every conceivable light, but she could not think of him with equanimity as her future husband. What her mother said of their straitened circumstances was all true. She felt it as only a beautiful young woman can feel poverty. She loathed her shabby gowns, her hundreds of petty economies, which seemed to belittle her. She saw other women without a tithe of her good looks or abilities make brilliant matches and appear to be happy. Why must she have so many scruples to prevent her being of their number? All this passed once more through her mind as she sat by the fire with her mother on that chill April day.

They were both silent for some time.

In the midst of this pause the door opened, and Lily entered with a basketful of many-hued embroidery silks in her hands.

"I've come down to find a warm corner," she said, in a cheerful, matter-of-fact tone. "It is freezing up-stairs, and Mrs. Blunt's curtains must be finished. I can't work with frozen fingers."

She sat down and commenced sorting her silks; then, looking up, she noticed the doleful faces of her sister and mother.

"What has happened? Any more calamities?" she asked, apprehensively.

Jessica sighed.

"Only Theodore Thorndyke," she said.

"Oh! he's always happening," said Lily, with a smile of relief.

"But he has happened rather more than usual," answered Jessica. "His attentions have crystallized into a set purpose. He is more definite than ever."

"Poor thing! Have you answered him?"

"Not yet."

"I wish," said Mrs. Hilton, almost tremulously, "that you could encourage your sister a little, Lily. You seem to have common sense: why don't you advise her?"

"Oh, she scorns advice," said Lily, threading her needle, and beginning to operate on a section of the curtain. "She knows her own mind."

"I really think," said Jessica, almost desperately, "that I shall ask advice of the first disinterested friend I meet! That person at least would be unprejudiced. Our minds are warped by this constant grind. We can't decide."

Just then there was a knock.

Miss Hilton started nervously.

"Come in," said she.

The maid entered.

"Mr. Carroll is in the library, Miss Jessica," she said. "He asked for Mrs. Hilton and you."

Jessica colored, perhaps with surprise.

No one had heard the door-bell ring, and certainly Beauty had expected no visitors of the opposite sex at that early hour.

"Don't bring him in here," whispered Mrs. Hilton. "Go and see him in the library, and make my excuses."

"Very well. Say I will be there directly."

The maid vanished.

"The very friend you wanted?" said Lily, with suppressed glee. "*He* will advise you if you ask him."

"Perhaps I shall," said Jessica. She was looking in the glass, smoothing her black head and straightening her collar in a business-like way.

CHAPTER II.

THE library, as it was called, was a room about ten feet square, the wall-space of which was almost entirely occupied by two windows, two doors, and a miniature fireplace.

The only feature of the apartment which could have suggested its too assuming name was a small book-case containing about fifty volumes on as many different subjects. As Jessica entered, George Carroll stood with his back to the empty grate, as though trying not to see its deficiency.

"Good-morning," she said. "I'm afraid it is shockingly cold here. I will ring for some one to make a fire."

"Oh, don't do that," said the young man, in a hearty voice, as he shook hands with Miss Hilton. "Here are the remains of some coals, and a bit of kindling-wood. It shall flame up gloriously in a minute, if you will let me take it in hand."

He had the tact to understand that the somebody alluded to by Jessica would be fully occupied at this time in the morning, without building fires. Jessica laughed as she granted him permission. He knelt down, and, with a few deft touches, in a wonderfully short space of time he reconstructed the materials at hand and applied a match to the pile. In a few moments the flame leapt up joyously.

"Ah," said he, "now we can be cosy!" and he settled himself in a chair near Jessica in front of the blaze. No possible act on his part could better have displayed the complete unconventionality of the man.

In personal appearance he was not, at first sight, in any way remarkable; not above what all writers have conspired to call "medium height." He was well developed, and muscular, without any particular beauty of form. His head was symmetrical, with a broad brow. His eyes were very deep-set, but without the disagreeable keenness of most eyes of that description. They were of a dark blue-gray, clear and honest, and full of a latent tenderness at times. The whole face was a clever and above all a *good* and wholesome one. There were unmistakable indications of health in the strong, abundant hair and moustache, the clean, ruddy skin, and the perfect teeth.

As Jessica looked at him to-day, he gave her a sense of repose. Here, evidently, was a man free from humbug. By the time he had got

off his knees she felt really cordial towards him, and showed it in her manner.

"Now," said she, "give an account of yourself. What brings you to New Jersey?"

"I was spending the night here with friends, and waited over a few trains to see you," said Carroll.

"It is a good many months since I have seen you. We ought to have plenty to talk about."

"Yes, our acquaintance has been of the most intermittent character. I must begin very ungallantly, to talk about myself. Have you seen my new paper, *Books and Authors*?"

"Yes; and it does you credit. You must be very proud of it."

"Are you in earnest? I never know. You are one of those brilliant sarcastic young women whom one can never feel sure about."

"What nonsense! I think you used not to be devoid of the power of repartee, if I remember right."

"The old story of the flint and the steel," said Carroll, laughing. "You could strike sparks from the coldest."

"All this is not telling me about *Books and Authors*. Are you making a success?"

"I don't know yet. We are not yet paying expenses. Editing a paper for the select and favored few, you know, Miss Hilton, is not coining gold. My friends are a little scandalized at my choice. I might have been a prosperous merchant instead of a poor devil of a journalist, but, you see, I can't help it. I was born with a passion for journalism."

"And a scorn of mercenary motives," added Jessica, with a small burst of enthusiasm. "I honor you for it."

Carroll colored ever so little.

"That is more than I deserve. One can't help being made in a certain mould. These feelings are neither assumed nor cultivated."

Jessica hesitated a moment. She was longing to draw him into a discussion, and by so doing to elicit the advice which Lily had jestingly bidden her seek.

"Do you think," she said, almost irrelevantly, "that women, as a class, are mercenary?"

"As a class, no," answered Carroll, readily; "but I am sorry to say that I know a great many individuals who are so."

"How does it manifest itself?"

"In making calculating marriages, or in arranging them for other people. So many young women are doing it every day."

"And you think prudence and convenience unlawful motives in marriage?" almost faltered Jessica.

Carroll glanced at her with sudden keenness in his kind eyes.

"You surely do not ask that seriously, Miss Hilton?" he said, almost sternly.

Jessica blushed violently: she wondered how much he knew of her reason for asking. "I have as much sentiment as anybody," she said, defiantly, not wishing to acknowledge herself reproved, "but I like to hear people's views."

"Well," said Carroll, "I should say, if I knew anything experimentally of such matters, that the good old-fashioned passion of *love* was the only excuse for matrimony. No man should marry unless he is obliged to. I think most people are happy without."

He looked quite gravely into the fire as he spoke. It seemed to Jessica that it would be possible to discuss almost any subject with him, he was so perfectly impersonal in all his remarks.

He was thinking just then, "What a fine woman gone to seed for want of training!—beautiful and clever, and, I greatly fear, without much heart."

He sighed, he scarcely knew why.

Jessica persisted.

"Men are well enough without marriage, I can well believe," said she; "but how about poor women? An old maid is a desolate being."

"Not half as desolate as a married woman wishing she were an old maid," he retorted, curtly. "These things can't be forced. If you have a friend, Miss Hilton, who is thinking of committing matrimony on any basis but that which I approve, pray tell her to keep on thinking a long time before taking the plunge."

He looked her full in the face, and she avoided his glance.

"I don't think I know any such," she said; "but if I did she would no doubt profit by your advice. You confess to knowing so much about it!"

Carroll took up his hat.

"You have really ensnared me into quite a dissertation," he said, ignoring her sarcasm, "but *Books and Authors* is waiting for me, and I must get to town some time to-day. It might as well be by the next train."

He held out his hand.

"Good-by," said Jessica. "Thank you for——" she paused, then ended with a laugh, "for making the fire."

"Don't forget my views," said he; and with a shake of the hand he left the room.

Jessica saw him walking away from the house. He was certainly not imposing by reason of his clothes. None but an acknowledged gentleman of good standing could have afforded to dress as he did, with an utter disregard of everything but cleanliness and comfort. His garments had once, of course, been new; but that was a long time ago. When most men were wearing collars up to their ears, Carroll wore his turned down. He never could be induced to don that badge of Philistinism, a frock-coat, but always wore a cut-away. Every year, when his sisters expostulated with him on the shabbiness of his clothes, and told him that the back of his favorite coat was shiny enough for an advertisement of Sapolio, he would laugh good-humoredly, and answer that he was waiting till he could go to England to buy another outfit.

At all events, his seedy hat covered plenty of brains, and the shiny coat was stirred by the pulsations of a true and manly heart.

For some reason or other, Jessica felt, after Carroll's departure, that her temporary indecision had vanished. Before rejoining her

mother and sister, she went to her own room and wrote to Thorndyke, briefly but kindly, telling him that what he asked of her she could never grant.

CHAPTER III.

SEVERAL weeks passed uneventfully, at least for Jessica. Nature, however, was full of events. The snow-patches were melting away, and the willows were growing golden at the top. The birds were coming back from the South. Here and there the earliest of the spring flowers peeped out, and the sky was blue and wind-swept.

Jessica grew weary of the mute reproach on her mother's face, and the spoken repinings which she too often expressed. The consciousness that she had done her duty was not enough for Jessica's unchastened nature. There were times when she almost repented of what seemed over-scrupulousness.

Of George Carroll she heard nothing. She saw *Books and Authors*, for that brilliant little weekly came to her regularly, a silent token that she was not forgotten. Here and there in its pages she had no difficulty in recognizing Carroll's hand, and, as far as she was capable of judging, she thought that he had not mistaken his vocation.

Life was becoming for her more and more difficult. Among the many longings natural to a girl of her years, some as vague and undefined as the moon looks in the daytime, was a very distinct aspiration, —more distinct, perhaps, than creditable. She wanted money. She had not wanted it enough, however, to relinquish any of her ideals in order to obtain it, and that fact robbed the desire of its sordidness.

It is hard for beauty to robe itself in second-rate garments, to sustain life with second-rate dishes, and take its pleasure in a humdrum, poverty-stricken manner.

Lily stitched away on her curtains, and had the glad consciousness that she was contributing to the meagre family exchequer. But poor Jessica, a lily of the field, born useless, and too spoiled to conquer her native indolence, had more time to fret over her unfortunate lot.

But the turning-point in her destiny was near. She was as ignorant of this as everybody else is on the eve of a tremendous crisis. Fate came to her in the shape of an expedition to town one day in the last part of April. It promised at the outset to be a commonplace, every-day affair, relieved only by the rather rare interest of buying a few new trifles such as women love. What it proved to be in reality we shall see.

When Jessica reached New York she left the boat with a crowd of other passengers. As she stood waiting to take the car in front of the ferry-house, a carriage suddenly drew up near her and a lady alighted. A glance told her that it was Mr. Thorndyke's sister, Mrs. Langford; but her face was so pale and troubled that for a moment Jessica almost doubted her identity.

Mrs. Langford paused to give her coachman an order, and caught sight of Jessica.

"The very person I want!" she said, hastily coming forward and

taking her hand. "I was on my way to see you. How fortunate that we should meet!"

Jessica looked perplexed. Mrs. Langford was not by any means an intimate friend of hers; in fact, she scarcely knew her; and they had not met for a long time.

The elder lady gave her no opportunity for answering; for which she was rather glad, as she had no reply ready.

"You must come with me at once," she continued, with a ring of imperativeness in her usually gentle voice. "It is a matter of life and death," she added, tremulously.

They were by this time blocking the way and attracting considerable attention. The car had gone, and Jessica had nothing to do but obey Mrs. Langford and enter the carriage, which still waited.

In less than a minute they were rattling away over the stones.

"Of course you think this very strange, Miss Hilton," said Mrs. Langford, as well as she could, considering the bouncing and knocking about she was getting from the carriage as it hurried over the execrable pavement. "The fact is that poor Theodore is dangerously ill,—we fear fatally so,—and he desires above all things to see you. So I started myself to fetch you, fearing that if I sent a note by a servant you would not realize the urgency of it."

Jessica colored and looked confused. "Does he really want me, Mrs. Langford? Would it be wise for a comparative stranger—that is, one outside of his own family—to disturb him just now?" she asked, doubtfully.

"Oh, yes, yes; he must see you," her companion answered, eagerly. "The doctor fears the worst results, and you must not refuse. I'm afraid this is a last request. He will take no denial."

After a moment's pause, Jessica said, "Tell me what is the matter with your brother."

"He was taken with a violent chill the day before yesterday, and the doctor was sent for at once. He has double pneumonia,—that is, in both lungs, you know,—and it is almost impossible that he should recover."

"Oh, we must hope for the best," said Jessica, feeling as she spoke what a miserable platitude she was uttering. Appropriate words on an occasion like this are not easy to find.

No more was said during the long drive. After a while they reached their destination,—a fine corner house on Madison Avenue, with a bow-window on the side-street.

The door was opened almost immediately, and they entered.

"Now sit down here, and I will go up to see how Theodore is," said Mrs. Langford, leaving Jessica in the drawing-room and hastening up-stairs.

Jessica felt bewildered. Among all her plans for spending a day in New York she had certainly never anticipated this.

Now that poor Thorndyke was ill,—probably dying,—she realized how fond she had been of him all these years. It is an oft-repeated truth that death hallows the meanest human being, and now in its grim shadow every act of Theodore's, no matter how trivial, seemed to

assume a new and painful importance in Jessica's memory. Not one kind or chivalrous deed was forgotten. He was a man endowed with the rare gift of constancy, and as he had loved her, so she knew he would continue to do as long as life should endure.

Jessica looked about the large room, and thought how it might have been hers. It looked like what it was,—a bachelor's drawing-room, somewhat stiff, and lacking in those graceful touches which betray the presence of a woman. But it had fine capabilities. She found herself mechanically considering how a dado and frieze would tone down the paper, how a *portière* between the rooms would soften the effect, how a lamp here and there, and a small tea-table—

The voice of Mrs. Langford roused her from her fit of abstraction, and she started almost guiltily as she remembered why she had come.

"Theodore would like to see you at once, Miss Hilton," said Mrs. Langford. She was very tremulous and tearful, and had evidently heard no good news of her brother.

Jessica followed her silently up-stairs. At the door of Thorndyke's room they paused for a moment; then Mrs. Langford noiselessly turned the knob, and they entered.

Theodore Thorndyke lay propped up by pillows, on a bed so large and heavily carved that his slight figure seemed almost lost.

He was dying. Jessica saw that at a glance, unused as she was to seeing the approach of death. He was breathing painfully, and his face was pinched and white, except for a scarlet spot on each cheek.

He looked at Jessica and smiled,—such a sad, sad smile to see.

"He wants to talk to you," said Mrs. Langford. "Take that chair by the bed."

Jessica did as she was bidden, and an embarrassing silence ensued.

Thorndyke looked imploringly at his sister, with an expression which seemed to signify that he wished to see Miss Hilton alone. Mrs. Langford beckoned to the doctor, who was standing near the bed, and together they went into the adjoining room.

"Miss Hilton," said Thorndyke, in a hoarse, low voice, "I have wanted so much to see you. I thought you would come if you knew how ill I was. There is something I must ask you, and yet I hardly dare to, for fear you should refuse."

It was pitiful to hear his tones, so weak and altered. The tears sprang to Jessica's eyes.

"I am so distressed," she said, "to see you like this! I could not refuse you anything."

"Ah!" he said, with a long-drawn breath of content. He closed his eyes, and lay for a moment or two as if he were unconscious. Presently he seemed to rouse himself, and said, feebly, "I want you to have my name. You did not love me. Never mind: I loved you. That is enough. Will you marry me—now? I cannot last long."

Jessica looked at him aghast. An inarticulate cry broke from her lips. This sound attracted Mrs. Langford, who came in at once, fearing that her brother was worse.

"Has he told you?" she asked, bending over the sick man, but looking at Jessica.

The girl nodded in a bewildered way.

"Will you do it?" asked Mrs. Langford.

"How can I?" faltered Jessica. "It is so sudden. I must have time to think——"

Mrs. Langford raised her hand as if to interrupt her.

"Look at him," she whispered. "He has no time to give. He is dying!"

Indeed, the effort had been too much for Theodore. He had sunk into a sort of stupor. Jessica sprang up, awe-stricken.

"Come away," she said, under her breath. "I cannot talk here." And she went towards the door between the two rooms.

The nurse and doctor hurried to their patient, and Miss Hilton and Mrs. Langford were left alone.

The elder woman took the hand of the younger.

"I implore you!" she almost sobbed. "It is all he asks,—so little,—so little,—and I, who love him, cannot win him this last happiness! Oh, Miss Hilton, why will you refuse?"

"I will not refuse," she said, gently. "Dear Mrs. Langford, don't be so distressed: indeed I will do it if you wish."

As she spoke, a tall man, in clerical dress, entered by the door which led into the corridor.

Mrs. Langford hurried to meet him.

"How is he?" he asked, taking her hand.

"He is dying!" she said, sadly. "But she has consented. You understand.—This is Miss Hilton, Dr. Farnham."

Jessica looked at the clergyman with large, scared eyes. She seemed moving in a strange dream. He grasped her hand warmly.

"That is right," he said, cheerfully; "that is right. Poor fellow! I know how much he desires it."

"We must not delay," said Mrs. Langford, with returning calmness. "The time is too precious to waste."

"Is not Mrs. Westalow coming?" asked Dr. Farnham.

"She is away, but we are expecting her every minute."

Then the physician came in, saying that if anything was to be done it must be done quickly.

The next few moments were more unreal to Jessica than anything else had been. She only knew that, rightly or wrongly, she had consented, and that she was being made the wife of Theodore Thorndyke. When the last irrevocable words had been said, she stood like a stone, not knowing what to do next, and scarcely caring what was expected of her.

The poor bridegroom tried to put out his arm and draw her towards him, but his strength was insufficient. Mechanically she bent over him, and, as she realized everything, a sudden gush of feeling overmastered him: she kissed his forehead amidst a shower of tears. For one moment he looked at her, his face lighted up by love and gratitude.

"My wife!" he said, softly. "She is worthy of it all."

Then his eyes closed, and Mrs. Langford beckoned Jessica from the room. A few moments after, he was visited by his lawyer, and roused himself once more to dictate his parting wishes to him. But he sank very rapidly after that.

He had made a brave struggle for life, and had not won.

He was living still at sunset, but his heart was just beating, and that was all.

Jessica stayed on with Mrs. Langford. Her new sister was more than kind. In the midst of all her trouble,—for it was genuine trouble, and she loved her brother truly,—she remembered Mrs. Hilton's anxiety on Jessica's behalf, and sent a telegram which simply stated that she was spending the night with friends, and would not return until the following day.

The evening passed, and still the doctor stayed, and there was no change in the patient. Mrs. Langford persuaded Jessica to go to bed, and promised to call her should she be needed.

Jessica required rest and time for reflection. The events of the day had tried her sorely, and she wanted to be alone. In the midst of her bewildered musings she fell asleep. It seemed but a few minutes later when she was roused by the opening of the door. She sat up, wide awake in a moment. In the gray dawn she saw the white, tear-stained face of Anna Langford.

"Do you want me?" Jessica said, pushing her long hair off her face. "Is he worse?"

"It is over. He is gone," said the other, with the calm weariness of grief and long watching.

"And I not with him?" cried Jessica. "How could I sleep so long?"

"Don't reproach yourself," said Mrs. Langford, with strange composure. "He died like a little child, without a struggle. He is at rest; and, oh! I wish that we were with him!"

And so Jessica Thorndyke was a widow.

CHAPTER IV.

It was decided that she should return home in an early train. Mrs. Langford promised that her maid should procure her the requisite mourning when she ordered that for the rest of the family.

At the mention of mourning, Jessica began to consider what she had done. As far as she knew, the act of marrying a dying man could not exert much influence over her future. In her supreme ignorance of the state of the case, she merely thought that she had been gratifying a wish on the part of Thorndyke to show his affection for her to the very last. It appeared to her that she had neither gained nor lost anything whatever by her acquiescence.

Thus she was parting from Mrs. Langford, when the latter said,—
"You will be here for the funeral, and, of course, remain for the reading of the will?"

"For the funeral, of course," Jessica assented; "but why for the other? That is a family matter, surely. I should feel out of place."

Mrs. Langford gazed at her, amazed.

"Is it possible that he did not tell you?" she cried.

"Tell me—what?" asked Jessica, quietly.

"That everything is yours," said Anna.

She turned pale. "What do you mean?" she asked.

"My dear child," said her sister-in-law, "my dear, innocent child! You did not know?"

"How should I?" said the girl, the color rushing back into her face. "You stun me! I don't know what to say."

"You do not realize it," said the other, kindly. "He loved you with rare unselfishness, and wanted to make you happy. He respected your honesty and truth, and he has given you everything. This is your house. His fortune is yours."

Jessica hid her face in her hands,—the beautiful, wonderful face which had kindled such love in the heart of him who was gone.

"Oh," she said, tremblingly, "I am sorry! I am sorry!"

Anna Langford looked at her in bewilderment.

"Very few women would say that," she said. Then she put her arms about her new sister's neck, and kissed her.

"You are what he thought you," she said, "and I shall love you, too."

Jessica went away, her soul tossed by various emotions. She had entered the house, on the day before, little better than a beggar; she left it one of the richest women in America.

She had not been gone an hour before there was a loud ringing at the bell, and Mrs. Langford heard in the hall the unsubdued accents of her sister, Augusta Westalow. The sisters met in the library, where in the dim light the new Mrs. Thorndyke had left Anna sitting.

"At last!" almost panted Mrs. Westalow, as she hurried in. "I thought that I should never get here."

Her advent seemed to fill the room with an atmosphere of haste and unrest. She was a woman of middle size, with keen glancing eyes, and a nervous manner,—the exact opposite to her sister, who was calm, gentle, and full of repose.

Mrs. Langford did not offer to kiss her. She seemed to brace herself for an unpleasant interview. People who encountered Mrs. Westalow when she was not pleased had need to take, as the French say, "their courage in both hands."

"The telegram only reached me yesterday," she continued. "It was very sudden, was it not?"

"Very," said Mrs. Langford, almost coldly. She had loved her brother, but Augusta cared very little for any one.

"Poor fellow!" said she, with some perfunctoriness, and removing her gloves and veil as she spoke. "Have you been home at all?"

"No," said Anna. "I am not going until after the funeral. Alfred is taking care of the children, but he will come on the day after tomorrow and take me back with him."

"Have you seen Mr. Banks?"

Banks had been Thorndyke's lawyer.

"Not since yesterday. That reminds me that it is my duty to prepare you for what is coming. Theodore was married."

"Good heavens, Anna!" cried Augusta, half rising from her chair,

then sinking back violently. "Some disgraceful clandestine connection, I suppose?"

"Neither disgraceful nor clandestine," said Mrs. Langford, resolutely. "I was present at his marriage."

"And who, in heaven's name," cried Mrs. Westalow, whose tone and aspect showed that heaven was extremely far from her thoughts just then,— "who was the woman?"

"Jessica Hilton," answered her sister.

"That red-and-white girl, with the poverty-stricken relations, who lives in New Jersey?" demanded Augusta. "Impossible! Poor Theodore must have been delirious! Why, the law should have interfered! And where were your senses, you madwoman?"

She got up and began to pace the room.

Mrs. Langford was perfectly composed. Her grief was so deep and her faith in Jessica was so strong that even the vituperations of her sister did not ruffle her serenity.

"I was prepared for all this from you," she said. "I shall never discuss the matter with you again, but I am willing to make a plain statement once for all. Theodore was mad about this girl for years, as you know. She refused to marry him, though she is very poor and he was very rich. At the outset of his illness he conceived the plan of marrying her and leaving her all his property. I brought her here when I saw that he would die, and die most unhappy if she did not come to him. Dr. Farnham married them, and Theodore died not long after. She was as disinterested as a child. She never knew till this morning that her condition was in any way altered by what she had done. Theodore was as sane as you are when he made his will. She would have had the money anyway, even had she refused to marry him. That is the whole story; but I want to add, that Jessica is a lady and a high-minded woman. I loved Theodore more than I did his money, and I mean to love his widow. I know well how you will behave about all this. You will do your best to make her miserable; but I mean to stand by her, for Theodore's sake and her own."

Mrs. Langford's utterance had become more agitated towards the end. She had never made so long a speech in her life. Probably Mrs. Westalow had never before listened in silence to such a long one. Her patience was at an end.

"And how about Paul Lorrimer? He has come home from Berlin. He will be here to-morrow. Will he sit down tamely and let this adventuress despoil us all?" she said, pausing in her wild-beast walk up and down the room.

"Paul is a man of the world, and will do what is best for himself. But, after all, a cousin is nothing to a man, compared to his wife."

Mrs. Langford sighed wearily, and put her hand to her head. Augusta always gave her a pain there.

CHAPTER V.

AMERICAN newspaper reporters are never idle. When they are not busy ascertaining the details of any subject, they are absorbed in

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manufacturing them. Therefore the bedside marriage of a dying man to a beautiful woman did not long remain unknown to them. The *Telephone* in particular excelled in reproducing the scene with embellishment, and the same page which described a thrilling "slugging-match," in which Boston's greatest pugilist had come off the victor, bore a large blotch of ink purporting to be a perfect likeness of "Beautiful Mrs. Thorndyke."

The editor whose business it was to furnish thrilling head-lines found himself forced to partake of several additional cocktails, which actually stimulated his imagination to such an extent that the next issue of the New York *Telephone* fairly bristled with a blood-curdling preface to the matter narrated below.

"A New Jersey Rosebud Grafted on to a Dying Branch of the Thorndyke Genealogical Tree," was about the mildest outcome of the cocktail's genial influence.

The widow herself, having electrified her family, was meditating quietly on her wonderful good fortune,—quietly, but for the fussy attentions and unconcealed delight of Mrs. Hilton and the ill-timed flippancies of Lily.

These two were infinitely more stirred by the news of what had befallen them than the heroine of the affair. Jessica bore her honors meekly. Every carriage which drove past the red-and-yellow Queen Anne villa went a little slower, as the occupants craned their necks and strained their eyes to catch a glimpse of the new widow.

Mrs. Hilton tried to be discreet, but failed. She was weakly human, and the bright anticipations of luxury and happiness, after the privations of the past, overcame the very slight self-control she had formerly possessed. When she viewed her meagre store-room, she laughed with joy at the thought of groceries which would never "give out," butter for a dollar a pound, and everything else to correspond.

Lily, who adored her sister, drew rosy pictures of the future. She failed to appreciate the finer fibre of the elder girl, who felt subdued and sad in the midst of her elation.

Once Jessica checked her in her thoughtless talk, saying, "It would be foolish to pretend that I loved him, but his death has made me feel very solemn, and we must behave decently, even among ourselves. I am very, very thankful to him."

"For dying?" said Lily. . .

It was strange that at such a time the person uppermost in Jessica's thoughts was George Carroll. What he would say, what he would think, whether he would misunderstand and blame her, or comprehend it all and exonerate her,—these were the questions which filled her mind.

Meanwhile, he was working in his little office, high up, within sight of the East River, bitterly, sadly reading her name between the lines of manuscripts and proof-sheets, and saying over and over to himself, "What a fine woman to have been so spoiled!" . . .

The day of the funeral dawned fair and cloudless, such a day as sends a thrill through all one's veins and causes the most confirmed

cynic to reconsider his decision that life is not worth living. It was just the day for a wedding: it was pitiful to think of burying any one with such sunlight bathing the world, with such a sweet breath of spring in the air.

Jessica, accompanied by her mother and sister, arrived at the Thorndyke house in Madison Avenue. When she threw back her long veil, one could see that she looked more beautiful than ever in her weeds. Mrs. Langford had evidently been watching for her, for she met her in the hall. After a silent embrace and an irrepressible gush of tears, Anna whispered, "You will want to see him once more before we leave the house," and she drew her towards the closed door of a small reception-room.

Mrs. Thorndyke trembled a little, but nerved herself to enter. The door closed behind her. She was alone with the dead.

She was pitifully conscious that she could not work herself up to the proper pitch of feeling. There is nothing more galling to one's self-esteem than to make demands on a sentiment which is proper to a certain occasion, and to find that one has, so to speak, overdrawn one's account.

Jessica's ideal widow would have prostrated herself on the coffin, calling upon the dead with many terms of endearment, and shedding very bitter tears. If she could have persuaded herself that she was sorry and bereaved, even this self-deception would have been most mollifying to her feelings. What she did, in reality, was this: she walked over to the casket and forced herself to look on the dead face. There was nothing terrible about it, after all. There was an expression of perfect peace on the quiet features. Death had done for Thorndyke more than life could have done: it had made the memory of the man in some sense dear to the woman he loved. She would never forget him.

Jessica laid on the coffin a bunch of lilies-of-the-valley which she had brought with her.

"Poor Theodore!" she whispered. Pausing for only a moment, she turned and left the room. She was very pale, and her limbs were shaking. On the threshold she almost stumbled against a man. He was dark, good-looking, and dressed in mourning. Mrs. Langford was talking with him.

"This is our cousin, Paul Lorrimer," she said. "Paul, this is Theodore's widow."

Jessica bent her head slightly in acknowledgment, and, passing swiftly by them, entered the room beyond. But Paul Lorrimer had seen her, and that instant changed the possible current of events, directing them into a new channel.

In the next room she found Mrs. Westalow, who did not vouchsafe any recognition of her.

Then came the departure of the mourners, and the funeral, which was very much like other funerals, save that the church was particularly full of people, most of them idle, curious, and gossip-loving.

When the will was read, the bereaved relatives of the deceased found that, with the exception of a hundred thousand dollars to each sister and to Paul Lorrimer, all Theodore Thorndyke's property, real and personal,

was bequeathed unconditionally to his widow. Mr. Banks had been the last person to confer with the dead man, and he had assured Mrs. Westalow, in an interview previous to the reading of the will, that it was perfectly valid and could not be broken.

Jessica found herself suddenly possessed of a house in town, a country-seat on the Hudson River, and so much money that the mere mention of the sum took her breath away.

As soon as it was possible, she rejoined her mother and sister and returned to New Jersey.

* * * * *

That evening Mrs. Westalow sat in her own drawing-room in earnest conclave with her cousin. Paul Lorrimer was a man of thirty-five or thirty-six years of age, rather tall, slightly built, and of decidedly distinguished appearance. His face was chiefly remarkable for an expression of great firmness. He was not a man to be trifled with, though he might find it far from difficult to trifle with other people. He looked more frank and honest than he really was. His hair was jet-black, parted near the middle on a very low forehead; his eyes were deep-set, and undeniably handsome,—such a pair of optics as contradict the truth of Emerson's ill-considered statement that "eyes cannot lie."

He had for years led the life of a respectable tramp, and had never earned more than enough to live upon with frugality. He could enjoy life on next-to-nothing a day, or spend royally with equal satisfaction if he had the wherewithal. Somehow or other he had been made a Secretary of Legation in Berlin, and had since his appointment become a more useful and creditable member of society.

This evening he sat with Mrs. Westalow over a wood fire which was rendered pleasant by the rawness of the April night air. He was regarding his kinswoman with a steady directness of gaze which would have been unsettling to some women. Augusta bore it without flinching. There was nothing about Paul which seemed to her new or striking. They had been brought up together.

"If you do not contest this infamous will," she was saying, vehemently, "you are not the man I have always thought you. What right had Theodore to leave everything to this adventuress?"

"Is not that rather a hard name to give a beautiful young lady?" asked Paul, in a low and singularly pleasant voice.

"I approve of calling a spade a spade," retorted Augusta, vigorously.

"I remember that you always talked fine nervous English," said Paul, with a slight smile.

"Then, as to her beauty," pursued Mrs. Westalow, "to me she always looks made up. It is such bad style to have a red-and-white skin and black eyebrows, like a head in a barber's window."

"Oh, you mustn't blame the poor girl if Nature blacked her brows and rouged her cheeks. She can't help being a beauty," said Lorrimer, with quiet enjoyment of his cousin's temper.

"Oh, are *you* going to become one of her champions? Anna has been making a fool of herself already; but we must make allowance for her, for her brain is half turned with a religious mania."

"You mean that *I* haven't that excuse?" said Paul, laughing outright. "Well,—do you know?—one can bear a good deal of religion in one's friends. It has a good effect on Anna. Why don't you try it?"

"Don't be so satirical, Paul. I see you haven't changed. Your long residence abroad has not improved you."

"No? I can't say the same for Westalow. I saw him in Paris, and he looked very happy."

Augusta flushed scarlet.

"What was he doing?" she asked.

"Consoling himself for your unkindness, I think," said her cousin, smiling rather maliciously.

"Don't let us talk of him!" exclaimed Augusta. "He is too disgraceful. Tell me about yourself. What brought you home just now?"

"I hardly know. A general feeling of unrest which comes upon me periodically. I am going back before autumn, as I have only a few months' leave."

"Seriously, Paul, have you no intention of contesting this outrageous will?"

"Seriously, Augusta, I have not."

"May I ask why?"

"You may. First, because litigation costs money,—which I haven't got. Second, because the will can't be picked to pieces, and there is no use trying. Banks says so. It would only create a scandal."

He paused, but as if he had not quite finished.

"Well," said Mrs. Westalow, trying to keep down her scorn, "third——?"

"Oh, there is no third reason to speak of. I simply don't want to. That's all."

He sat regarding her imperturbably. She flamed out at him.

"Oh, you fool!" she cried. "You are won over by that doll-faced woman."

"I have quite a passion for dolls," he said. "Don't you remember how I used to borrow yours when we were children?"

"Oh, Paul, don't be insane!" she persisted. "Help me in this matter. I stand quite alone. Aren't *you* angry or disappointed at all?"

"Disappointed I am, of course, but not angry. Theodore's money was his own. I can't criticise his taste. He left it to somebody whom he loved more than he did you or me. Is that astonishing?"

"No, not so astonishing as this beautiful Christian spirit which you have suddenly developed. There is something back of all this, which I shall find out in time. You can't hide it from me."

"My dear cousin, I should no more think of hiding anything from you successfully than I should think of commanding the sun to stand still and expecting him to do it."

He rose as he spoke, and held out his hand.

"Good-night," he said.

Mrs. Westalow ignored his hand.

"Good-night," she responded, briefly.

CHAPTER VI.

It happened that George Carroll went once more to New Jersey to visit some friends, and before he took the train for town on the following day he walked down the street where the Hiltons lived. This he did against his better judgment, for he said resolutely to himself that he desired no further acquaintance with Jessica Thorndyke. But it is wonderful how while our will is deciding to go one way our feet, guided by our inclination, carry us another. Every one has experienced these phenomena for himself, and it is unnecessary to enlarge on the subject.

It was a most delicious day in the latter part of April. The spring had been backward, as our springs always are, but the flowers were beginning to bloom and shed their fragrance abroad. As Carroll approached the Hiltons' gate he experienced a curious feeling of satisfaction or the reverse, he could not tell which, for leaning with her arms crossed on the top of it, and with her head laid upon them, was Jessica. Her face was averted, and she did not see him. The sun glinted on her dead-black hair and lighted it into a dull rich lustre. Her gown was severely simple, but followed the superb lines of her figure with accuracy.

George looked a moment without speaking. In that moment Beauty raised her head. She was as beautiful as ever, her skin as fair and wonderful, her color deeper and more peach-like. If she had been grieving, thought George, her sorrow had left no trace. She was so glad to see him again that she smiled brightly; then, remembering her recent widowhood, she summoned an expression of gravity.

"I am very glad to see you, Mr. Carroll," she said, holding out her hand to him and opening the gate. "Won't you come in?"

Carroll took the hand for a moment in one of his own, and took off his hat with the other.

"I am on my way to the train," he said, doubtfully. "It goes in ten minutes."

"There are trains at all hours," said Jessica, still holding open the gate.

And Carroll, the strong-minded, the invulnerable, felt his resolutions melting into thin air.

"I will come in for a minute or two, if I may," he said. "Isn't this rather a public place for leaning on gates?"

"I was trying to imagine that I was in the real country," said Jessica, "and forgot that everybody in the street could see me. Thank goodness, we soon shall be in the real country. We move next week."

As they talked, they walked up the little path to the house.

"And what do you call the real country? Where are you going?" asked Carroll, as they sat down on the piazza in the sunshine.

"To Acacia Point, on the Hudson, about twenty miles from town," answered Mrs. Thorndyke. She colored a little. She was desperately anxious to know Carroll's opinion of her, and yet feared to hear it, too.

"Ah," he said, dryly, "your new place. You have become a

landed proprietor since I saw you some time ago. How do you like it?"

"Not very much, so far," she answered, coldly, for his tone hurt her.

"You have quite been keeping the daily papers going lately, Mrs. Thorndyke," he pursued, uttering her name with evident effort.

She made a slight gesture of annoyance.

"How is *Books and Authors*? I have not read it for a week or two," she said, changing the subject; then, with a sudden impulse, characteristic of the woman, she said, "What are people saying about me, Mr. Carroll?"

She turned towards him, and flashed her great gray eyes full on his face. Some sudden emotion on his part made him so vexed with himself that he answered sharply.

"As you are not an author, Mrs. Thorndyke, it is not my business to know," he said.

She shrank back, sorely wounded.

"I made a mistake," she said, with an uncontrollable quivering of the lips. "I forgot that our slight acquaintance did not warrant my question."

He flushed crimson.

"Now I have offended you," he cried. "I am the rudest brute in the world; but I have more heart than manners. I ought to be very happy to be asked anything by you."

"Then why," she demanded, her hurt feeling hardening into displeasure, "why do you speak to me so? I know very well what you think of me."

"What?" he asked, eagerly. "I wish you could tell me; for—I don't know myself!"

"You think me the sort of woman you were speaking of last time I saw you. You misunderstand me utterly. However," she concluded, with a desperate effort at curbing her petulance, "what earthly difference does it make? You are only one of a large body of people who will always impute to me wrong motives."

"I want, above all things, a serious conversation with you. When may I have it?" asked Carroll, gravely.

"That is impossible to prophesy," said Mrs. Thorndyke, stiffly.

"You are going up the river, you say," he persisted. "May I go there to see you?"

"If you come I certainly cannot refuse to see you," she answered.

"Good! A little encouragement goes a long way with me," he said. "I will come. In the mean time, *Books and Authors* waits for me in town."

He rose, and stood looking down at her.

"You will forgive me, then, won't you?" he asked. "I shall make an able defence."

"I will accept your apology when you make it," she said.

Without offering her his hand, he turned and walked off down the gravel path, between the beds where the spring flowers were coming up. Outside the gate he paused and waved his hat, then strode out of sight.

He left Jessica plunged in an unaccountable bitterness of spirit. Somehow, she had longed to open her heart to George Carroll, and he had repulsed her. She had not been used to such treatment from the men whom she knew, and his behavior, while it wounded her sensitive nature, thrilled her with the charm of something unaccustomed. She longed almost passionately for his approbation, and she felt that he had not accorded it to her.

As for Carroll, he went away furious with his own stupidity, as he called it. He began to think that he was misjudging Jessica, and that she might have something plausible to say on her side of the question. Many a woman had enjoyed his good graces in a mild, platonic way; he had a friendly regard and even admiration for a great many girls, but none of them stimulated his pulse or made him lose his head, and he had said to himself that the woman who should have this dangerous but delicious influence over him would be Mrs. George Carroll if he could make her so. Meanwhile, he shunned the thought of matrimony.

CHAPTER VII.

"I WILL be decorous, I *will* be proper, but I must enjoy the good fortune which Providence has sent me," said Mrs. Thorndyke.

She was sitting on the veranda at Acacia Point, in the grateful shade of the red-and-white-striped awnings.

Lily and Mrs. Hilton were engaged in their usual occupation of listening to the family oracle.

"What new form will your enjoyment take?" asked Lily. "The place is in good order, you have got the horses you wanted, the family diamonds have been handed over to you. What more do you want?"

"Ah, those diamonds! That was a bold stroke; but they are going to propitiate the enemy."

Jessica smiled complacently down at her own shapely hands, which were ringless, save for one plain gold band.

"How?" asked Lily, with interest.

"Diamonds have conciliating qualities second only to money. I am going to send the biggest pin in the box to—Augusta Westalow!"

"Beauty, you are very deep."

"You are very shallow if you don't see that the poor woman deserves something for having left me in peace."

"That I can't understand," said Mrs. Hilton, "unless some influence has been brought to bear."

"It has. Paul Lorrimer, now my first-cousin by marriage, has been persuading her to leave me in the enjoyment of my ill-gotten gains. And now he writes to me asking if he may come to make my acquaintance; and I must say that he writes a most fascinating hand. Look here."

Jessica drew a letter from her pocket and showed the envelope to Lily. It was addressed in a very even, angular hand, remarkably clear and legible, and rather feminine in its delicacy.

"Listen to the note," said Jessica, and read as follows:

"MY DEAR MRS. THORNDYKE,—

"You must excuse my boldness in writing to you. My only claim on your attention is the fact that poor Theodore and I grew up together, and that we were deeply attached to each other. As you see, therefore, I am naturally very anxious to make the acquaintance of one who was so dear to my dead cousin. Will you consider it an obtrusive impertinence if I ask permission to call upon you at Acacia Point? I knew the old place very well in my boyhood, and should enjoy seeing it again.

"Yours faithfully,

"PAUL LORRIMER."

"There, what do you think of that? Isn't he kind, considering that the 'old place' ought to be his?" asked Jessica.

"So that is how you are going to enjoy yourself, by having Mr. Lorrimer up to stay?" asked Lily.

"What else can I do? Do you suppose all that love for Theodore was evolved from his inner consciousness to do duty on this melancholy occasion?"

"I dare say," said Mrs. Hilton. "Men are so false."

"I thought it was women who had that reputation, mamma. Well, there can be no harm in asking one's own cousin up to one's own place."

"It will have a giddy look," said Lily, "especially if he should chance to be young and good-looking."

"He is both," said Jessica, "and I shall go at once and write to ask him to spend Sunday here." . . .

By this time the family had established themselves at Acacia Point and felt thoroughly at home. Mrs. Hilton took entire charge of the household, and, now that there were sufficient means at her command, her talent for housekeeping came out in its proper light.

The whole place was charming: not large, but extremely fortunate in its situation. The point of land on which the house was built jutted out beyond the railroad, which ran through a cutting behind it, spanned by a bridge which led directly to the place.

In the distance this thickly-wooded bit of the shore lay on the water like a piece of rich green moss flung out on the river. The lawn sloped down to the water, and at one place there was a huge boulder on which the airiest of summer-houses was built, a slight bridge connecting it with the mainland. The house itself was of granite, with a great many gables and bow-windows and wide verandas. It was covered with wistaria, which in May draped it beautifully with pendent grape-like clusters of lilac blossoms. On one side of the house was an open space of smooth fresh turf, where Mrs. Thorndyke had ordered two tennis-courts marked out, and all around this space grew dark copper beeches, brilliant pinkish-purple Judas-trees, and the stately acacias which had suggested the name of the point.

Well out of sight behind here were the stable, boat-houses, and a good deal of glass for raising grapes and nectarines.

It was altogether a place which no one would be sorry to own, and

on the Saturday morning when Paul Lorrimer arrived, after an absence of many years, it looked and smelt like Paradise. He had been met at the station by a low well-appointed victoria, with two men on the box dressed in the deepest mourning livery.

"She knows how to spend money," he reflected, with a comprehensive glance which took in the points of the gray cobs.

He had an odd sort of feeling that this carriage in which he was sitting and this place to which he was going ought to be his.

He was dressed accurately all in black, and he looked distinguished and interesting. As he drove over the bridge, a train thundered beneath it. The gray cobs quivered, but behaved admirably. All along the approach to the house the grass had been left long, and it was starred with buttercups and daisy-buds. In a week or two it would be as white as a new fall of snow.

Paul remembered the view of the river which lay before him glinting in the strong morning sun, the hills opposite standing out distinctly in the clear atmosphere. It made him feel at least fifteen years younger.

"It was always a stupid hole," he reflected. "She is very welcome to it."

There was no sign of life when he reached the house, except a manservant who appeared to take his valise and who inquired respectfully if he wished to go to his room. Feeling tolerably fresh after his short journey, he replied in the negative, and, seating himself in the drawing-room, he awaited Mrs. Thorndyke's coming.

The room was full of flowers: every available vase held a bunch of lilies, roses, or pansies. The long French windows were open, and the song of a canary in its gilded cage on the veranda came shrilly in. On a low ottoman by one window lay a morning paper, a little black Swedish glove, and a bunch of fading crimson roses. There was a crayon portrait of Theodore over the mantel-piece. It smiled down with unconscious pleasantry on Paul waiting for Theodore's widow. Verily, one man soweth and another reapeth.

Presently Lorrimer heard a sound like the soft trailing of a gown over a wood floor, and in a moment Jessica stood before him. She was dressed, as usual, in a very plain gown, which had not a hint of what Ruskin calls "evasions into prettiness," and yet she was beautiful. The perfect contour of throat and cheek, the pure red and white of her complexion, looked all the more charming for their sombre setting. The only relief to the general blackness of her attire was the thin muslin bands at wrists and throat,—the badge of her widowhood.

She held out her hand to Lorrimer with the slightest possible parting of the lips,—hardly a smile.

"I am glad to see you," she said, in a winning voice.

He immediately said to himself, "She is playing a part. This gravity is feigned, but I won't let her know that I think so."

"It seems very pleasant to be here once more," he said, aloud, "and very sad, too. Thank you for letting me come."

"I am glad to know you," she answered, with that same sweet

gravity. "I have heard—Theodore—and the rest speak of you often."

"Yes, we were all much together when we were children. The old place looks very lovely."

"Very," she replied; "but I am told that we have two deadly enemies lying in wait for us,—chills and mosquitoes."

"That may be true. There is rather a marshy look to the ground at the back of the place, which makes one apprehensive."

"Would you like to look about a little?" Jessica asked.

"Very much. It is too pleasant a day to stay in-doors," said Paul.

Mrs. Thorndyke picked up the black glove which lay on the ottoman, and after some little search succeeded in finding its mate. In the hall she stopped for her parasol. The envious sun was not allowed to revel in the whiteness of the beauty's complexion. Lorrimer smiled, and remarked to himself that his fair cousin appreciated her charms.

"We shall probably find mamma in the summer-house. It is her favorite resort on these sunny mornings," said Jessica, trailing her black gown over the bright sward, and walking slightly in advance of Paul.

"The place looks exceedingly well kept up," observed Lorrimer, giving a comprehensive glance at his surroundings.

"I am glad you think so. The location is ideal, and being so near the water is charming. At least we like it."

As they approached the summer-house they perceived that Mrs. Hilton was seated there in a low wicker chair, with a book in her hand. It was too much like a butcher's or grocer's book to be in harmony with her poetical surroundings. A pile of similar volumes lay on a small table near. The good lady's brow was knitted, as if in deep thought, and she held a lead-pencil suspended in mid-air, as though uncertain as to the result of her calculations.

When she was roused by the voice of her daughter, she rose and welcomed Lorrimer with great cordiality. There was a slight tinge of nervousness in her manner. She appeared to feel that he was a person to be conciliated. Jessica was cool and untroubled. She showed plainly that she was not ashamed of her position and knew how to maintain it.

Lorrimer, while he chatted with Mrs. Hilton, quietly observed and criticised Mrs. Thorndyke. He thought her behavior perfect. There was an exquisite completeness about her exterior, which satisfied the eye; and there was something within all that loveliness which he felt sure was worth discovering.

Jessica spoke little. She leaned her arms on the balustrade and looked over into the water. In the cleft of the rock grew a small cedar-tree. It thrust its gray branches and sparse foliage up towards her, as though in a struggling despair of ever reaching such perfection.

Presently, in a pause in the conversation, Mr. Lorrimer approached her.

"What a lovely spot this must be at sunset!" he said.

"Have you never been here before?" she asked, raising her head slightly, and looking over her shoulder at him.

"Not since I was twenty,—which is long enough ago."

"Ah, twenty is the age when one appreciates sunsets."

"That is a compensation for much crudity," said Paul. "To me, twenty means mere babyhood. I have got long past it,—in years, if not maturity."

"That may be true of men. Women, as a rule, are not crude at twenty," replied Jessica.

"Some are not, I allow," he said.

There was that in his manner which made the remark a personality.

Mrs. Hilton raised her eyes from the contemplation of the butcher's book.

"You resent being called crude, don't you, Jessica?" she said, smiling.—"You must know, Mr. Lorrimer, that Mrs. Thorndyke is our family oracle. We have always put her on a pedestal and worshipped her, and she is not apt to yield her opinion for any one."

"And why should she?" said Paul. "Who questions the divine right of beauty? I, for one, bow to perfection."

"I suppose, then, you seldom find it necessary to remove your hat," said Jessica, in a caustic tone.

She resented such undraped compliments. They offended her artistic sense.

Lorrimer looked silently into her eyes. His head was uncovered, and he stood with his hat in his hand. His eyes conveyed more homage than his words had done. There was a certain boldness in his glance at times which caused women to shrink from him, but he could be exquisitely tender.

So these two looked at each other, and Mrs. Hilton looked at the butcher-book. The spell was broken by the sound of wheels on the gravel drive. An exceedingly dingy carriage, evidently one hired from the neighboring village, drawn by two attenuated horses, was approaching the house. It drew up at the door, and a woman alighted. A crape veil of large dimensions was drawn tightly over the face, but there was something in the figure which affected Jessica unpleasantly and recalled some one disagreeable,—whom, she scarcely knew.

Lorrimer uttered a suppressed exclamation,—not indicative of delight.

"Augusta Westalow?" he said.

"Dear! dear!" said Mrs. Hilton, casting her accounts on the table recklessly, and rising with a hasty movement.

An expression of amused disdain swept over Jessica's features.

"She has come to fight me on my own ground," she observed, with a sort of haughty tranquillity.

"It will be very entertaining," said Paul. "I am glad to be here. Do not let her intimidate you, Mrs. Thorndyke." Then, lowering his voice, "I will protect you from her, never fear."

Jessica tossed her head.

"Fear? What does that mean?" said she, with a gesture of superb contempt. "I do not know the feeling. Come, I must receive her."

She left the summer-house, descended the steps, and passed lightly over the shade-checked lawn, threading her way between the stems of the pine-trees. Lorrimer followed slowly. He felt repulsed.

CHAPTER VIII.

MRS. WESTALOW stood on the veranda, with her veil thrown back. Jessica mounted the low steps with her hand extended.

"Mrs. Westalow!" she said. "How kind to dispense with a formal invitation! I was intending to write to you next week and ask for a visit, but you have forestalled me. Where is your trunk? Let me make you comfortable."

By this time Jessica, cool, smiling, beautiful, had clasped her sister-in-law's hand, and was leading her into the house.

"I have no trunk," said Augusta, briefly. "I have not come to stay. As to invitations, I have always been accustomed to visit my brother's house without formality. I have always made myself at home."

"Ah," said Jessica, with innocent sweetness, "I can well believe it."

Mrs. Westalow now caught sight of Lorrimer.

"What! *you* here, Paul?" said she, with surprise.

"Yes, Augusta. I am an invited guest," said her cousin, coolly. "How warm you look! You really should not travel such a hot day." Mrs. Thorndyke led the way into the drawing-room.

"Let me take your bonnet and veil," she said; "and pray take this fan. You are very kind to undergo such a disagreeable journey for my sake."

Lorrimer stood in the background, with an indescribable expression of face. Augusta was literally speechless, but her eyes talked for her. Jessica feared every moment for her own gravity, which was going. Lily happened to bounce in, and thus caused a diversion. She was presented to Mrs. Westalow, who looked at her in a judicial manner.

"I understood that you were all beauties in this family," she said, with great impertinence.

"You were misinformed," said Lily. "The whole stock of beauty was exhausted when my sister was born."

Mrs. Westalow made no reply, but, turning to Jessica, said,—

"Mrs. Thorndyke, I can only stay a short time. May I see you alone?"

"Certainly," said Jessica; "but first let me offer you some luncheon. I see it is one o'clock."

The clock struck as she spoke.

Mrs. Hilton had by this time gathered sufficient courage to enter the terrible presence. She had met Mrs. Westalow before, and had carried away from the interview a great and nervous horror of Jessica's sister-in-law. It pleased Mrs. Westalow on this occasion to be kind and condescending to the little lady. Perhaps Jessica called out so

much dislike and ill-feeling that there was none left for the other members of her family.

The pleasant, amicable party went in to luncheon. Mrs. Westalow swept the dining-room with a comprehensive glance before taking her seat. Mrs. Hilton said grace. Augusta looked keenly at all the table-appointments, the blue china, the silver, the bowl of red roses in the midst of it all. Then she pensively regarded her napkin-ring.

"This is mine," she said, holding it up for inspection. "I cut my teeth on it."

Paul held out his hand for it.

"What tender interests cluster round a souvenir like this?" he said, gravely, addressing every one in general and nobody in particular. "See the dents made by Mrs. Westalow's innocent little teeth! Why, I protest, it makes me young again!"

Paul was the only person who ever rendered his cousin speechless. For a moment she was silent, but not longer than a moment.

"That napkin-ring is one of my earliest recollections. I can't imagine how my poor brother ever happened to have it. It is marked with my name," she observed.

"I have heard of certain fortunate persons who were born with silver spoons in their mouths, but never any one with a silver napkin-ring," said Paul, still intent on the article which was attracting so much notice. "This ought to be preserved as the first thing which taught Mrs. Westalow to bite. Since then, Augusta, have you not found that there are some objects less yielding than silver?"

"Come," said Jessica, hastily, "we really seem to have very little to talk about, to allow such a small thing to engross our conversation. Tell me something about yourself, Mrs. Westalow. Have you made your plans for the summer?"

Augusta sipped her tea for a moment before replying.

"Not yet," she said. "Mrs. Langford and I have had many discussions on the subject. She, you know, would like to go to Ocean Grove, on account of the prayer-meetings. One lives in a bathing-suit there, and goes to meetings all day long. Now, to me the bathing-suit is the only attractive feature, but that is exactly what Anna objects to. She is extremely proper in all her ideas. The prayer-meetings, I must confess, are too much for me. Anna is the victim of a religious mania. Now, I prefer to go to some place where one can see a few decent people, and have a little gayety,—to look at only, I mean, of course, for my mourning would prevent my participating in it. Newport is charming if one can afford a cottage, but the hotel life is abominable. I can't afford a cottage. I wonder *you* don't take one, Mrs. Thorndyke."

"Really, I can't think of any special reason, Mrs. Westalow. The idea has never occurred to me," said Jessica, coldly.

Augusta ran on:

"Oh, I saw a friend of yours the other day,—young Carroll. Good-looking, and not stupid, but unfortunately a beggar."

"Ah?" said Jessica. "I never heard of his begging."

"Never? I thought he had begged something of you, which wasn't granted. So the world says, at least."

"The world is blind, like its interpreters," said Mrs. Thorndyke, haughtily, and turning a shade or two paler.

"Is George Carroll a friend of yours?" asked Paul.

"He is, indeed,—a valued friend," she said.

"Mr. Carroll is one of the best and nicest young men I know," said Mrs. Hilton, with a sort of mild boldness.

"Goodness, however," said Augusta, tartly, "never put money into any man's pocket. In fact, the reverse of that quality is often more remunerative. A man can't carry his fortune in his face, as a handsome woman can." Her eyes were fastened on Jessica's face as she spoke.

Jessica pushed her chair away from the table, and rose.

"Mrs. Westalow," she said, with a cutting glance from her blazing gray eyes, "you said that you desired to see me alone. No doubt my mother and the rest will leave us the drawing-room to ourselves.—Lily, perhaps Mr. Lorrimer would like some tennis by and by. Will you see that he does what he likes?"

She pushed aside the lace curtains between the rooms, and stood waiting for Mrs. Westalow to pass out. She looked like a young empress, with her splendid figure silhouetted against the white drapery and her slender hand raised and half buried among the folds. Her whole form seemed to dilate with resentment of the many insults which had been cumulatively heaped upon her, but her voice was courteous, though icy cold. Mrs. Westalow entered the drawing-room, and her sister-in-law followed. Jessica waited until her guest was seated, then, taking a fan from the mantel-piece, sat down in a large wicker chair near the window. Augusta appeared slightly disconcerted. She kept her eyes down, and toyed a moment with the rings on her fingers, slipping them up and down with a nervous motion. There was something about this young, black-robed goddess which frightened her. Self-control and the restraint which refinement imposes always impress a vulgar mind with a vague sense of its own vulgarity. So this woman, who had been born a lady, but whose tongue would have won laurels for a Billingsgate fish-wife, was discomfited by the repose of manner exhibited by her brother's widow.

There was a silence, during which the little canary sang shrilly in his gilded cage, and the perfumes of the spring afternoon crept in through the open window. The river gleamed silver through the half-closed slats of the blinds. An adventurous bee, who had strayed in along with the fragrance and the sunlight, boomed heavily about among the roses which stood in vases on the mantel-piece and on the little tables in which the room abounded.

Mrs. Westalow felt that she must be the first to speak.

"You were, perhaps, surprised to see me here," she began.

Jessica looked her calmly in the face, but made no reply.

"I came with a specific purpose," she continued.

Again no answer.

"I came," she went on, desperately, "about that diamond pin,—the one you sent me. It was an insult."

Jessica swayed her fan slowly backwards and forwards.

"I regret that you should so misconstrue me," she said.

"I don't misconstrue you," said Augusta. "I judge you by myself."

"You must pardon me if I object to that standard of measurement," said Jessica, with ceremonious coolness.

"You are a clever woman, Mrs. Thorndyke. You utter the greatest rudenesses with a point and polish which almost make them appear like civilities; but you do not deceive me."

Again Augusta commenced pushing the rings up and down her spare fingers in a flurried way.

"Why waste time, Mrs. Westalow, in telling me your opinion of me? It is not the first time that you have tried to impress me with a realization of your enmity. You are entirely inimical to me. You have been so from the first. When you came here to-day, I resolved to take the initiative and treat you with all kindness and consideration. But no woman with any self-respect—and I have a great deal—can allow herself to be insulted pointedly and repeatedly without resenting it. All idea of friendship is at an end. You hate me bitterly, and show it on every occasion; and I—pardon me again if I say that I do not love you."

Jessica's face was pale with deep feeling, and the irrepressible tears stood in her eyes. Mrs. Westalow colored deeply, and avoided her glance.

"I disdain to justify myself," Jessica went on, her voice trembling a little. "I will only remind you of what you know to be the truth,—that I refused to marry your brother, when his kindness and nobility of heart led him to urge such a course upon me. It was only when I knew that he was dying, and that it would never again be in my power to grant or deny a request of his, that I yielded to the importunity of himself and of your sister. I am cruelly misjudged by you, and, I dare say, by others like you; but as long as my own heart does not condemn me, I can bear these persecutions and slanders, humiliating as they are."

During this impassioned speech Mrs. Westalow had been divided between a desire to relent and mingle her tears with those of the beautiful pleader and a wish to escape from the effect which she felt was being produced on her by such eloquence. She was an impulsive woman, and her shallow but emotional nature was stirred by what she heard. Whilst she was debating what course to pursue, Jessica regained her self-possession, and furtively dashed away the moisture which stood in her eyes.

"What 'insult' was there in my sending you the diamond pin? Why am I so grossly misrepresented?"

"It was an insult because you have supplanted Anna and myself; because out of all the jewels that should have been mine you dole out one diamond butterfly and think it a generous gift," said Mrs. Westalow, with a burst of fierceness. She had decided not to relent.

"I consider it a mistaken kindness," said Jessica. "The jewels—and until Mr. Thorndyke's will was read I never knew that you had any family jewels—were intrusted to my keeping by my husband,—your brother,—and I did not feel myself at liberty to dispose of them."

I should not have considered it right to give any of the diamonds to my own family, and, as I am not at all greedy for them myself, they are simply one more in a long list of responsibilities which already cause me some uneasiness. I sent you the pin because I thought it a graceful and sisterly act on my part, and because I was foolish enough to fancy that you might derive some pleasure from it. This is the insult which appears to rankle."

"I have brought back the pin," said Mrs. Westalow. "I am glad you gave none of them to your own family. The set will not be broken."

She had had a vague idea that Mrs. Hilton and Lily were wallowing in diamonds,—that, Cleopatra-like, they might be dissolving precious stones in their tea, for aught she knew to the contrary. It relieved her mind to ascertain that the butterfly was the only one of the pins which had left its box in the solemn velvet-lined family jewel-case to wing its way to a new owner.

She put her hand into her pocket, and drew out a small box.

"This is the butterfly," she said, handing it to Jessica. "If your motives were good, I thank you."

Jessica took the box.

"And I thank you," she said, "for a valuable if painful lesson. This shall be my last attempt to gather grapes from thistles."

She rose as she spoke, and Mrs. Westalow felt that the interview was at an end. She stood for a moment silent, then said, "It would have been better to let me tell you this before I was compelled to break bread in this house,—*your* house," with much bitterness.

"It makes little difference," replied the widow, with great calmness. "In future my hospitality shall not be thrust upon you."

"One word more," said Mrs. Westalow, taking a long breath, as though to swallow the last remark. "To be honest with you, I must confess that I should never have tamely submitted to the present state of things if I could have done otherwise. I fully intended to contest Theodore's will; but no one supported me in the undertaking, and so I did nothing."

"All this is unnecessary," said Jessica. "This is nothing new. I know it already."

"Very well. Then I have said all I ever intend to say on the subject."

Mrs. Thorndyke gave a smile of infinite incredulity, but made no reply to the remark.

"Allow me to send you to the station," she said, politely.

"The carriage will be here in a few moments. I ordered it to return."

Mrs. Westalow went over to the mirror, put on her bonnet and veil, and, after some little search, succeeded in finding her gloves. Then she turned and confronted Mrs. Thorndyke.

"It will be some time before I see you again—voluntarily," she said.

Jessica smiled. The woman was so insulting that it was almost amusing.

"Good-by," she went on. "I am indebted to you for my lunch, which was very good. Be so kind as to send me the napkin-ring marked A. T. As I remarked before, it is mine. I hope you will prosper and enjoy your ill-gotten gains. Good-by."

The situation was becoming a little strained, and when the sound of wheels was heard, both ladies experienced a sense of relief.

The rusty carriage, with the dirty driver and the lean horses, drew up. Mrs. Westalow descended the steps and climbed into the carriage, metaphorically shaking the dust of Acacia Point off her feet.

Jessica sought refuge in her own room, where her enforced calm gave way to a burst of tears.

CHAPTER IX.

WHEN Jessica descended to the piazza, about five o'clock, the traces of the tears which she had shed were not entirely obliterated, and her beauty had suffered somewhat, though only temporarily.

Lorrimer noticed these signs of depression,—a paleness, a general languor of carriage, and a slight redness about the eyes. He felt some surprise at what he considered a new discovery,—that Mrs. Thorndyke was possessed of sensibilities. These he considered a needlessly luxurious possession for himself, but he could not help experiencing a vague feeling of gladness that he had found an additional charm in his new kinswoman.

When Jessica appeared, he was sitting, dressed in white flannels, in a long wicker chair, under the shade of the awnings. Lily, who had been playing several violent games at lawn tennis with him, reclined in another equally comfortable chair, and was fanning herself briskly.

"We are utterly dishevelled, as you see, Mrs. Thorndyke," said Paul, rising, and offering her his chair.

His looks belied his words, for he had the luck to be one of the favored few who never appear uncomfortably warm.

"Miss Hilton has beaten me shamefully," he went on, as Jessica declined the proffered seat and chose a more upright chair. "I am out of practice, you see, for in Berlin one does not play tennis. There is but one set in the whole place."

"How odd!" said Jessica. "Why is that?"

"It is considered very *infra dig.*," said Paul; "and as to a man appearing without his coat, even on the tennis-ground, he would have half the city authorities about his ears in no time."

"I want to hear all about Germany," said his hostess. "I have always longed to go abroad, but have not had the good fortune."

"Don't begin anything till we have had tea," cried Lily. "We are dying for something to drink."

As she spoke, the obsequious butler appeared, bearing a great silver tray, on which the Thorndyke tea-set looked undeniably rich and handsome.

Tea, refreshing and delicious as it is at all times to a lover of that beverage, certainly tastes better out of Dresden cups into which it has

been poured from a silver teapot so bright and polished that one takes pleasure in looking at it. In the days of shabby gowns, maids-of-all-work, and Queen Anne hideousness in New Jersey, Lily and Jessica had always indulged in afternoon tea; and a memory of the milk which tried to be cream and couldn't, the baker's bread and questionable butter, the small allowance of sugar, often rushed into the minds of the two girls in their altered circumstances.

Now the cream was not as thin as if just escaped from a course of Banting: it was so rich it would scarcely pour. Now the bread was the freshest and the butter the most delicious that one could desire.

A pretty woman never looks more charming than when she is making tea. Paul's æsthetic taste was thoroughly satisfied as he watched his new cousin presiding over the tea-table.

When all were comfortably ensconced, cup in hand, and Mrs. Hilton had joined the party, the conversation wandered back to Germany. Paul told how for some time he had held the position of secretary to the American Legation at Berlin. Some months before, the minister had been recalled to America, for a temporary leave of absence, by pressing family affairs, and during this visit Lorrimer had been appointed *chargé-d'affaires*. He went on telling many amusing anecdotes illustrative of the Germans and their mode of life, and made himself thoroughly amusing till it was time to dress for dinner.

Lily pronounced him a success. She also observed that she wished to go abroad in the autumn; but, though her sister assented to her first remark, the second remained unanswered.

After dinner, during which Jessica lost a good deal of her pensiveness and brightened wonderfully under the influence of the lively talk, she sauntered out to the summer-house on the rocks, and was presently joined by Lorrimer. He ardently desired a *tête-à-tête* with her. He had dropped the tone of bantering gallantry which he instinctively used towards women, for he felt the force of her silent dignity, which seemed to forbid anything even remotely bordering on flirtation.

Besides the natural bias which most men have in favor of pretty women, a sudden and very decided preference had sprung up within him for the lady who had robbed him of his inheritance.

As he walked across the little bridge which led to the summer-house, Jessica was sitting in the sunset light, with her back towards him. A look of sadness had again come over her face, as he observed when she turned and saw him. The conflict of the morning had deeply impressed her. He could perceive that it was so; and if he admired the tenderness of a heart which could be wounded by Augusta Westalov's tongue, he respected hugely the spirit which knew how to withstand its attacks, at least in the presence of the enemy.

He felt impelled to raise the cloud from Jessica's face if possible. As he stood beside her, he said, with a matter-of-fact air,—

"How well I remember fishing off this old rock years ago! It was my first lesson in patience, for I used to sit for hours and never catch anything."

"Tell me about those old days," Jessica said, with some interest. "You know I am quite ignorant of Theodore's boyhood."

"He was a good fellow," said Lorrimer, more gravely, "and, for some inexplicable reason, fond of me."

"And his sisters?"

"They were just as one who knows them now would imagine them,—Mrs. Langford a quiet, pretty little girl, devoted to her doll-children, obedient, affectionate, in short a model, Augusta a little devil in petticoats, and in this case, as you see, the child was mother to the woman." He leaned against the pillar by which he stood, and looked out upon the sheet of shining water with eyes that saw again the by-gone years instead of his present material surroundings.

After a pause, Jessica said, in a low tone,—

"It may be bad taste to speak of the subject to you, but I want so much to know the——" She paused, with evident embarrassment.

"Go on," said Paul. "Please feel no diffidence with me. There is not the slightest need for it."

She seemed reassured, and continued:

"What I want to know is the substance of Mr. Thorndyke's old will,—the one before the last."

She said this with a manifest effort.

Lorrimer replied with perfect coolness, and without removing his gaze from the golden-flooded western horizon,—

"The old will left a million to each of the sisters, and all the rest to—me."

"And how was it that Theodore inherited the whole estate in the beginning?" asked Jessica, with great interest, now that the ice had been broken.

"My uncle," said Paul, still looking away from her, "cherished certain ideas in regard to property which are peculiarly un-American. He believed in primogeniture, and in the English manner the bulk of his fortune came to Theodore. My cousin shared his father's opinions to a great extent, and it was generally understood that I was his heir. However, though that arrangement suited me admirably, I cannot deny that Theodore had a very excellent reason for changing his mind."

He laughed rather mechanically, and Jessica's quick ear detected a bitter ring in his words. A sudden rush of feeling burst through the wall which her dignity had erected between them.

"Ah," she said, impulsively, "how you must hate me!"

Lorrimer did not move. He only turned his deep, inscrutable eyes upon her.

"No," he said, with slow distinctness: "it's a very odd thing, but I don't."

There was something so cold-blooded in his perfect self-possession that she felt no shame for what she had said. The barrier between them was gone, and they must now consider themselves on a more intimate footing.

"I meant to hate you desperately," he went on, apparently quite unmoved by what he was saying, "but for the life of me I couldn't. I had expected to see the face of a schemer and adventuress; but the look in your eyes when we met outside the room where poor Theodore was lying disarmed me. They were the eyes of a good woman."

He was silent. The little waves lapped gently at the foot of the rocks; the sun had gone, and the hills looked stern and dark against the primrose sky.

"And yet," said Jessica, almost tremulously, "I had robbed you."

"Not intentionally," he said, settling down on the bench opposite to her. "I know of your conscientious treatment of Theodore. I think you deserve all you have. I'm a battered worldling myself, but I can still, perhaps all the more for that reason, appreciate goodness in others."

"If we are to see one another often, as I pray we shall, you must stop having any feeling about me and my disappointment. I can take it like a man, and I shall never remind you of it myself. I shall like to feel when I go back to Germany, as I must do in the autumn, that you are enjoying everything to the full; I shall like to think of you here in the midst of all that is charming,—the queen of it all,—the right woman in the right place. . . . Now, will you forget all this feeling about my wrongs? You mustn't waste your pity on me."

He ended more lightly than he had begun.

Jessica sighed a sigh of real relief.

"Thank you so much!" she said. "Everything will be easier now."

She rose, for the interview had lasted long enough. As far as maintaining her dignity was concerned, she felt herself a miserable failure, but this new friendly understanding seemed to lift the weight from her conscience. Lily's voice broke the stillness as they turned to leave the summer-house.

"Two candidates for chills and fever!" she called, gayly, as she came from out the shadow of the pine-trees.

Lorrimer answered in the same mood, and they passed into the house. Lily watched them with an amused smile on her face.

"I perceive," said she to herself, "that the widow Thorndyke is not entirely inconsolable."

CHAPTER X.

LORRIMER did not leave Acacia Point on the Monday. His three hostesses pressed him to stay, and the days went so fast that it was Thursday before he realized that he was engaged elsewhere for the following Sunday. About a week after he had left, he met Augusta Westalow in town.

"Do you want the latest news from your new sister?" asked Paul, as coolly as if he were not putting a match to dynamite.

"So you have been there?" she said. "So you have gone body and soul over to the enemy?"

"Such a charming enemy, Augusta! You know the Bible rule about enemies, don't you?" he asked, provokingly.

"You have got some scheme on hand, I can see, Paul," said Augusta. "But you mustn't feel too sure. Other men consider that woman's millions charming, and need them more than you do."

"What do you mean?" he asked, with sudden sharpness.

"That young beggar of a newspaper man—Carroll, his name is, isn't it?—has been visiting Mrs. Thorndyke."

"Has he?" asked Lorrimer, annoyed in spite of himself.

"Certainly. He is an old friend of hers. Why shouldn't he go?" answered his cousin, still provokingly.

"There is no reason that I can think of," he replied. But the thought of Carroll at Acacia Point caused him many unpleasant twinges during that day and several others.

Our young editor, truth to tell, enjoyed his visit hugely. He had not meant to enjoy it, and was rather vexed with himself for feeling so comfortable in Jessica's house.

During his short sojourn he did not see his hostess alone until just at the last. He was to leave in an hour or two, and Mrs. Thorndyke artfully introduced him to the summer-house on the rocks.

"Sit down here," said she, almost boldly. "You are the only man who tells me the truth. I want to know how I appear amidst my new surroundings."

"Well, upon my word, that is a leading question," said Carroll, laughing as if he rather liked it.

"You never were given to flattery, you know," said Jessica, laughing too. "I don't know when I feel more totally crushed and trampled upon than after an interview with you."

"Then my friendship is very wholesome for you. I am the only leaven in this lump of worldliness and temptation," said George, didactically.

"Yet it is a very pleasant lump," said Jessica, with a half sigh.

"And the leaven is unwelcome, eh?" asked Carroll.

"No," said Mrs. Thorndyke, smiling now; "not when it is represented by you. Now give me good advice."

So he endeavored to do her bidding, and the two talked for some time, getting nearer to each other's real feelings than they had ever been before. And George Carroll left Jessica with the conviction that she was not the spoilt, worldly girl he had always thought her, and with the sickening realization that this discovery came too late.

Being a brave man, he decided that he had better not see her any more in this confidential manner. He stuck to his word with redoubled energy, straining his faculties to the utmost to insure the success of his darling enterprise, which had suddenly become somehow so much less precious. He neglected Jessica, who felt it. Paul Lorrimer paid her the most delicate homage, which soothed her wounded pride, and thus she saw much of her new cousin and nothing of George.

Thus the summer passed without special incident. The public had almost forgotten Mrs. Theodore Thorndyke. More recent sensations were agitating it.

In the autumn she began to weary of her seclusion and chafe for a little of the old freedom. A slight attack of malaria, largely mixed with *ennui*, made a change of air imperative. In September Lorrimer had sailed for Germany in high spirits and flattering himself that he

had secured a high place in the good graces of his cousin-in-law. In October he was startled and delighted by a letter from that capricious young lady, announcing that she and the Hiltons intended to spend the winter abroad.

"I want an entire change," she wrote. "I am tired of the river and the trees and the uninteresting natives who are always trying to work on my feelings and get something out of me. I have tried the Lady Bountiful business till the clergymen have asked me to stop pauperizing the neighborhood. Now, would you recommend Berlin as a good place to winter in? You are the only relative we have abroad, or friend either, for that matter. I don't want to be a tourist, but to settle down and learn some interesting things about some country. Please advise us."

I have said that Paul was startled and delighted. He had an excellent reason for feeling something besides pleasure at the prospect of having Mrs. Thorndyke all to himself. As usual, there was a woman in the case, and it was the thought of her which made him tremble. It took a long time to determine what advice he should give the Hiltons and Mrs. Thorndyke, and his mind was seriously unsettled for several days in consequence. He had intended to return to America as soon as possible and follow up whatever advantages he had gained while there. Meanwhile, he had been temporizing. The other woman in the case, who considered that she had a clear right to him, might make things very unpleasant; but then—when would he ever again have such an opportunity of winning Jessica's confidence and affection? She would be entirely dependent on him in every emergency, for, as she said, she had no other friend in Europe.

The upshot of all his fevered cogitations was that his answer to Jessica was so entirely satisfactory that the next letter which he received from her instructed him to engage for her the most charming apartment in Berlin.

CHAPTER XI.

THE "other woman" was Countess Irma von Wolfenfels.

Her mother was a Scotchwoman, who at the age of five-and-thirty had still belonged to the numerous sisterhood of spinsters. She had met, amid the ever-green hills of Carlsbad, old Count von Wolfenfels, a peaceable, gentle old man of retiring habits and no particular love of the sex. The Scotch lady, well-born but indigent, decided at once to marry the count, but it took the poor old nobleman much longer to decide to let himself be married. She pursued him, ill-natured people say, into more than one city, and at last he yielded his name and fortune, if not his heart, to the Caledonian enchantress.

Their only son died at his birth, but Irma lived and grew to be the pride and solace of her father. When she was twenty-seven years old, and still single, having refused a great many offers of marriage, the count died, and the mother and daughter were thrown upon each other's mercy, which was not extensive nor very tender. Each one saw and hated the other's infirmities, and, though they praised one another

extravagantly in the presence of strangers, their lonely hours, which they endeavored to make as few as possible, saw many a wrangle and actual disagreement.

They lived now here, now there; to-day in Florence, next week in Berlin. They knew everybody, were received at half a dozen European courts, but not very much admired by any one who knew them well.

During his residence in Berlin as Secretary of Legation, Paul Lorrimer had met and developed a singular intimacy with the German girl. The old countess, whose wicked old head was not troubled overmuch with notions of etiquette except in public, laid no restrictions on Irma, who had certainly reached years of discretion. Paul found himself welcome enough at the rooms which the mother and daughter inhabited in the *Hôtel de Russie*, and he amused the elder lady as much as he entertained and captivated the younger. He was the only American Irma had ever known, and she took pleasure in practising her wiles upon him. At one time Berlin society, which has a provincial love of trifles, interested itself in the affairs of the Wolfenfels to the extent of informing them, through one or two of its most virtuous ornaments, that the freedom of Countess Irma's behavior was a scandal to so proper a city as the capital of Germany. Old Wolfenfels laughed her worldly, rasping old laugh, and said in a discordant tone that she knew her daughter better than any one else, and she would answer for her morals.

Meanwhile, Irma was discreet enough in public to satisfy all the gossips from Unter den Linden to Potsdam, and the wickedest thing she had ever done in regard to outraging the *convenances* was to have an occasional conversation with Lorrimer when her mamma was not in the *salon*.

She was a woman of very striking personality. Her height was unusual, and she was certainly rather massive, but she had superb, rust-brown tresses, which she wore plaited around and around her head, a pair of fine, violet-gray eyes, which were perpetually rolling, and a mouth which would have been handsome but for its excessive mobility, which showed too much of the place where nature had fastened in her handsome teeth. She spoke English with fluency and an accent which was charming though it sounded affected. Her accomplishments were many. She possessed what she herself called "a phenomenal voice," and Wagner was her idol. Never a season passed without a visit to Baireuth.

There was nothing modest or retiring about Irma. She had her mother's push and enterprise, and a cosmopolitan experience.

The old countess had a voice like a peacock, and a contempt for mankind in general and womankind in particular. She had seen so much of Continental laxness, told and heard so many scandalous stories, that she was a person practically unshockable,—but highly respectable herself, be it understood. In person she was stoutish, bilious-eyed, and painted. Her elaborately-dressed gray head was always crowned by a widow's cap, fastened on with black, ball-headed pins.

The deceased count had been dead less than a year when Jessica decided to visit Berlin and break in on this happy circle.

It was not without trepidation that Paul Lorrimer wended his way to the Russie, to inform his fair friend of Mrs. Thorndyke's expected advent. He found mother and daughter occupied with their music and embroidery. Both looked as though they had just been having an encounter; but the atmosphere cleared at once as Paul appeared on the scene.

"Ah, Mr. Lorrimer!" exclaimed Irma, quite eagerly, and with a delicious soft roll of the r's in his name. "You come at the right moment, is it not, mamma?"

"It is always the right moment for Mr. Lorrimer," said the countess, with a graciousness which was unintentionally contradicted by the natural gruffness of her voice. "Irma and I were having one of our discussions. The dear child is wonderfully headstrong, like her poor father."

"Ach, lieber Papa!" sighed Irma, casting up hands and eyes. "He was a dove! an angel!"

Paul had kissed the countess's hand in good German fashion, and approached Irma almost with nervousness.

"I have something to tell you," he said, "which will interest you."

"More interest than usual?" she asked, with a little languid serpentine movement of the neck. She was sitting before the piano, half turned away from it.

"More so to me. Do you remember my cousin in America, of whom I spoke?" he went on.

"As if one could forget!" she murmured, rather spitefully. "One hears so much of this Madame Thorndyke."

"You will not hear of her, but see her," said Paul, boldly. "She is coming to Berlin for the winter."

"How most extraordinary!" cried Irma. "What for, may I ask?"

"To amuse herself,—for change of air and scene. Why not?"

"How odd you Americans must be! We do not go to cities where we know nobody. You care nothing about being strange or lonely. You go everywhere, *pour passer le temps*."

"Is your beautiful widow coming here?" asked Countess von Wolfenfels, sharply. "I want to see her. Is she as handsome as Irma?"

"Oh, countess!" said Paul, unabashed, "how can she be?"

"Hush, mamma! Seek no more compliments for me, please."

Irma smiled rather spitefully.

"I am all impatience to see this lady," she said. "I hear much of American beauty."

Presently the old countess left the room, as she often did during Paul's visits. Irma moved a little nearer to him.

"Well?" she said.

There was something tigerish in her great eyes as she fastened them on Lorrimer's face.

"Well?" he echoed, with a shade of uneasiness in his manner.

"Have you nothing to say to me?" she asked, still with her eyes fixed on him.

"I thought I had been saying a good deal," he replied.

"A good deal, yes; but nothing to the purpose," she answered, grimly.

"What do you want?" he asked.

"Only the fulfilment of your word," she said, speaking very slowly and clearly. "That is all."

Lorrimer set his teeth hard, but spoke with the sort of nervous good humor which one uses in addressing a dangerous dog which must be pacified.

"Countess," he said, suavely, "the whole affair was a failure. I am a failure. Nobody wants a failure."

"Perhaps," said the countess, "there are some who have the bad taste to want them."

A soft look came into her eyes, and they relaxed their grip on his face.

"It has all turned out badly, you see," said Lorrimer, more firmly. Irma's melting moods were comparatively easy to manage. "I am no better off——"

"That is not so! It is false!" she interrupted.

"What reason have you to say that?" he inquired, coolly.

"I know it," she said, with a sort of ferocious sullenness. "You are better off by a great deal. Your cousin's will made you so."

"A mere nothing. I am simply one of your caprices. You care nothing for me. The whole thing is a mistake." He tried to laugh.

Irma got up and came still nearer. Her eyes were on a level with his now, and their violet depths burnt unpleasantly.

"Look!" she said, rapidly, and with a strong German accent. "The day when you speak of love to that other woman, she shall know all! I know you! You do not deceive me! I despise you, but, *ach Gott*, I love you! On that day I shall know what you have done; nothing shall be hid from me, and then *nothing shall be hid from her!* I have said it!"

With a sudden hiss of passion, she sank back into her chair. Lorrimer's face was gray, and his features were quite hard and quiet.

"What a tigress you are!" he said, sneeringly. "Your preference for me is really extraordinary. I don't deserve the honor."

"No," she said, with a slight laugh, "you do not, but you have it all the same. I only want to warn you."

"A very pleasant way of doing it, certainly,—one which makes you, of course, dearer than ever to me." He smiled diabolically.

The blood surged over her face.

"Paul," she cried, "forgive me! I am so hasty, so wicked! I will not any more speak so!"

She rose again and held out her fine white hands to him, but he was as hard as flint.

"One does not forgive at once," he said, in a low tone. He was unmoved, while she was quivering and pulsating with a passion as strong as her anger had been a minute before.

With a rustling of skirts Countess Wolfenfels entered, and, after a few commonplace civilities, the visitor withdrew.

It was balm to his spirit to receive Mrs. Thorndyke when she arrived. He was at the station to meet her, and escorted her party to the beautiful apartments which he had secured for them in the Hohenzollern-Strasse. Here he had managed to have a fine open wood fire burning in the *salon*, and masses of flowers, for which he had ransacked Berlin, perfumed the room.

Jessica stood with a halo of firelight and a radiance from the wax candles encircling her. Her face was framed in the long black fur which enveloped her throat and shoulders. She drew off her gloves and opened her cape.

"You *have* done well!" she said, admiringly. "How charming it all is!"

Mrs. Hilton had already gone to hunt for the store-closet and kitchen. The maid- and man-servant whom this luxurious party had brought were standing helplessly outside the door, and Lily was darting hither and thither as usual, now pausing to dip her nose into a cloud of odorous bloom, now warming her cold hands at the genial fire.

"It's perfectly lovely!" she cried. "To think of our being in Berlin!"

Paul laughed heartily.

"How delightfully American!" he said. "One never hears that 'perfectly lovely' anywhere else but there."

"Well, if it is perfectly lovely what else can I say? I don't know what it is in German," retorted Lily, sinking into a deep chair with a sigh of contentment.

Presently, when the dust of travel had been removed, a delicious little supper was served, and Jessica had further cause to admire the forethought of her cousin.

As for him, he felt his chains being riveted. She was bewilderingly lovely. He could not eat for drinking in her beauty,—the velvet of her cheek, the turn of her neck, the delicious darkness of her eyes.

"I can't believe that you are the young lady who came abroad for her health," he said, looking at her with a sick dazed feeling which was new to him.

"Oh, the voyage set me up completely," she replied.

"But it nearly killed me," said Mrs. Hilton, plaintively, as she strenuously refused a plate of salad embellished with a *compote* of cherries. "It's a risky thing to come abroad at my age."

"Your age, my dear Mrs. Hilton?" cried Paul. "Why, I am very nearly your age myself!"

This sally elicited a burst of light-hearted laughter from the two girls. They were in high spirits to-night, and easily amused.

"Oh, I can hardly wait till to-morrow!" cried Lily, as Paul was leaving them to their needed repose. "I saw nothing to-night but horses as thin as towel-racks, and several soldiers."

"You will see several more soldiers while you are here," said Paul, laughing. "That is a never-failing diversion, if you care for them."

It was long before sleep descended on the little American colony in the Hohenzollern-Strasse. Everything, from the feather-bed coverlet

to the porcelain stoves, was new to them. Jessica's maid, who was a German, could fortunately communicate with the other servants and explain whatever puzzled her mistress.

Under silken quilts, beneath showy curtains, at last they slept, eager for what the new day would bring.

CHAPTER XII.

THE following morning was devoted to unpacking and arranging their new abode. To be sure, Lily was not quite as useful as usual, owing to an ever-recurring desire to stand at the window and watch the passers-by. Everything amused and delighted her, especially the soldiers, of whom, as Paul had predicted, she saw "several more." A foreigner in Germany is scarcely aware how much the brilliant uniforms of the military part of the population add to the beauty of the streets, until he goes to some country which is *not* an armed camp, when he misses the former magnificence.

The Hussars, in particular, fascinated Lily Hilton. During the first weeks of her sojourn in Berlin she never could resist the temptation of turning round to get a last view of their uniforms as they passed down the street, and the favored individual, with the vanity of his sex, would walk a shade straighter, if possible, hold his head a little stiffer, and swagger in a way which betrayed the consciousness of being watched by a fair foreigner.

As soon as Lily could find an escort on this first day in Berlin, she sallied out, Baedeker in hand, to see the beauties of the city. She and Jessica's maid went in one droschky, and Mrs. Thorndyke and her mother in another. Both carriages were drawn by horses inconceivably thin, which looked as if the army must have confiscated all the oats which should have been theirs.

The weather was cold, and the leaves in the Thiergarten were falling. The Americans commented on the different points of interest in a disrespectful way which would have enraged the loyal *cocher* had he numbered among his accomplishments a knowledge of the English language. He drove on, however, quite oblivious that these Goths and Vandals were ridiculing the size of his beloved "Linden" and laughing at his venerable self.

It was too late in the day to see the Emperor in the historic window of the palace, where Baedeker says he always stands at a certain hour, but they caught a glimpse of the most wonderful man in the world, with his great, grim, mastiff face, and his fine old head full of tremendous schemes for the future.

It was late when the weary and attenuated horses deposited the party at their own door, if such can be called a door which belongs to half a dozen other families, like the portal in the Hohenzollern-Strasse.

They found Paul waiting for them, and together they had their tea.

Paul was full of entertaining nonsense. He talked mercilessly of the American minister, who was an amiable Western man, who had never heard of dress-boots or a white tie and could not speak any

language but Westernese. He ridiculed the poor gentleman with so much wit that Lily and Jessica screamed with laughter. Then he gave a humorous account of one of the attachés, who thought himself burdened not only with the maintenance of the honor of America, but, Atlas-like, with the whole round world.

This badinage precisely suited Jessica, who became shamefully hilarious considering her weeds, among which, as Paul had once gallantly observed, she looked more of a flower than ever.

Deep in her heart was a longing for news of George Carroll.

Presently, when the merriment had subsided, she said, boldly,—

"Do you ever hear of our friend George Carroll?"

"Oh, yes: he is a friend of our consequential attaché. But surely you must have seen him more lately than I have," said Paul, with a certain dryness.

"No," said Jessica, almost sadly: "he has quite deserted us."

"He works very hard at his paper. There is some talk now at home of an International Congress in the interests of copyright, and some one said that in case the thing was really arranged to take place, Carroll might be a delegate."

"He is very clever," said Jessica, gently; and there the talk ended.

* * * * *

It was a curious fact that Lily always managed to make friends wherever she went; and the present offered no exception to the general rule. It was also noticeable that while Jessica, through Paul's guidance, saw, in a quiet way, a good deal of diplomatic society, Lily struck out boldly and became acquainted with certain delightful literary and artistic persons of the Jewish persuasion.

In Berlin the Hebrews, having been excluded from court and military circles, denied the army, diplomacy, and everything else aristocratic, as a profession, have turned their exceptional talents and ability into other channels. They are thus, many of them, extremely wealthy; they are editors, men of letters, sculptors, painters, and musicians, to an extraordinary extent.

It was Lily's good fortune to make the acquaintance of a family the head of which was editor of the first review in Germany, and to be invited to sup with them one evening. As she spoke good French, and her hostess had a fair knowledge of English, all went smoothly from a linguistic stand-point.

The company included one of the finest violinists in the world, a professor who thought that he spoke English, and a very well known authoress, all of whom shall be nameless, though there is nothing disagreeable to record of any one of them. The old lady was a picture, with her white puffs of hair, and black lace draperies falling from her head. When asked if she spoke any English, she said, with great devoutness, "*Gott bewahre!*" and that closed the conversation as far as Lily was concerned.

The professor was a gentleman with truly leonine professorial locks which seemed to despise coercion and rose on end superior to it. He had come all the way from Vienna in order to write a work on—
What, think you? On Goethe? on Schiller? On the genius of the

German tongue? No, no! On the madness of Hamlet compared to the madness of all the rest of Shakespeare's characters!

I have sometimes wondered whether he has finished the preface yet. Oh, you gloomy Danish royal gentleman in black, how much you have to answer for!

The supper was charming, and nobody thought of missing ham: in fact, I am not sure that it was absent from the board, as the modern Jews are too often nothing at all dietetically.

Lily's host informed her that she was the only American lady whose English he had ever understood,—which compliment she owed to the fact that she was talking more slowly than she ever had done in her life. As for the gentleman whose exhaustive knowledge of English had led him to make a study of England's greatest bard, when Lily addressed a few words in her mother-tongue to him he visibly wilted, and could neither comprehend nor answer. The violinist talked a little, in very good English, and ate much. He informed Lily that two years hence she might have the pleasure of hearing him play in New York. It did not appear to occur to him that he might be dead before then, to say nothing of Lily.

This evening was only one of many spent among very interesting and cultivated persons. The rich and vulgar Jews Lily did not meet. All this time Mrs. Thorndyke did not, of course, escape observation. Beauty without fortune is sure to be noticed, and when it is reinforced by "more money than one knows what to do with," as people say, Beauty is welcome wherever it chooses to go. Lorrimer did his duty nobly, not selfishly encouraging his fair cousin to pine in solitude, but drawing her as often as possible out of her seclusion. He might have obtained all sorts of invitations for her; but she declared that dinners were the only form of social entertainment at which she would figure in this first year of her widowhood.

For the first three weeks after Mrs. Thorndyke's arrival in Berlin, Paul managed to keep his rival queens apart, though he knew very well that this state of things could not last forever, since nothing is enduring; and indeed it did not. The meeting came about in this wise.

Paul had brought together Mrs. Thorndyke, the Hiltons, and a charming family who had a delightful villa in the direction of the Zoölogical Gardens. This whole family was never so happy as when doing something kind to somebody, especially strangers and foreigners: therefore as soon as the American ladies were made known to her, the mother of the family invited all three to dinner.

People who "dine late" in Berlin dine at five,—the hour when British subjects of similar standing are employing their afternoon tea as a bridge from luncheon to an eight-o'clock repast.

Early as it was, it seemed late, on account of the shortness of the winter day. The lamps and candles were lighted, and a wood fire leapt in the great fireplace of the hospitable hall in which the visitors found themselves. Their hostess was an Englishwoman, who had lived for thirty years in Germany, but was still English to her fingertips. She was a slight, quiet little lady, one who was loved directly she showed her own sweet nature, which was pure unselfishness and

goodness. Her husband was a singularly polished and handsome man,—a friend of the royal family, yet a Liberal in his politics. There were also present two daughters, in whom the blending of fine national traits had produced extremely happy results.

To this pleasant circle were added Lorrimer, the diplomatic gentleman who felt himself to be perpetually saving the honor of his country, another and more real diplomate, who had been accredited to many courts, where he had successfully represented England, and an old couple whose principal claim to our consideration is that they belonged to the two oldest families in Berlin.

After the Hiltons and Jessica had entered upon that *mauvais quart d'heure* which is generally much longer than its name implies, there was another arrival. Paul could not help feeling a creeping sensation along what Irishmen call "the spine of his back" when he saw the two Wolfenfels enter the room. They were received with cordiality, presented to the Hiltons and Mrs. Thorndyke, and the young ladies of the house courtesied to the old countess, who kissed them on the cheek.

Jessica looked, as usual, very beautiful, though she was dressed in the deepest mourning. Her gown was entirely of crape, not China crape, or what the milliners call "crêpe lisse," but that heavy, crinkly, and expensive fabric which is worn by bereaved persons who can pay for it, and by some, I fear, who cannot, thus making the dress-makers partakers in their grief. Her bodice was high at the throat and long at the wrists, finished, as usual, with muslin bands. One could imagine, though, from the creamy tint of the skin which was visible, what superb shoulders and arms the crape must conceal.

Lily was in half-mourning, and wore gray Swedish kid slippers, which were hereafter to excite remark.

As dinner was immediately announced, there was little time for the guests to make observations among themselves.

The host sat between the old countess and Mrs. Hilton, and Mrs. Thorndyke found herself next to Irma's mother, with the young attaché on the other side. She at once became absorbed in observing the countess, and left Mr. Hale to himself. The old lady was openly interested in her fair neighbor, and kept the conversational ball rolling.

"So we are both widows, my dear Mrs. Thorndyke," she said, in her grating, discordant voice, which gave one a sympathetic sore throat only to hear it. "I see you don't wear a cap. Few young widows do. Quite right, too; quite right. If the count had died when I was your age, I wouldn't have worn one either."

She did not add that if the count had died at that period she would never have known him at all.

"And how do you like Berlin?" she went on, with scarcely a pause. "How does it compare with New York?"

"Oh, they are not in the least alike," said Jessica, smiling. "You have much better pavements than ours, for one thing."

"Indeed? What else strikes you about our town?"

"Well, the thinness of the droschky-horses, and the smallness of the linden-trees, if you don't mind my saying it," Jessica ventured to say.

"Not at all. I am not a Berliner. But you mustn't say it to any of them. They think a great deal of those trees."

"There is not a great deal of them to think of," said Jessica, smiling.

The countess, though Scotch, had a sense of humor, and smiled too. Then she turned suddenly towards Jessica and said,—

"You are very beautiful, my dear."

"Thank you," said Jessica, demurely. "I try to be."

"It doesn't take much trying, I suspect," said the old lady. "Do you know your color looks like paint? It is wonderful."

"It certainly is *not* paint," said Jessica, rather warmly.

"Take my advice, my dear. Never touch your face with anything but rain-water. That is all I use; and my complexion is wonderful for a woman of my years."

Jessica looked at her with round eyes, for a more daringly frescoed old façade than Countess von Wolfenfels's face it would be hard to imagine. While Beauty was wondering whether she had heard aright, the youthful diplomatist seized the opportunity to enlighten her as to his own importance and the total want of ability which was conspicuous in the rest of the legation. He had scarcely commenced his plaintive tale, when the countess, having finished her *entrée*, began again to talk.

"That is my daughter over there," she observed. "Don't you think her a great beauty?"

Jessica looked critically at Irma, who was more languishing and serpentine than ever, as she was seated next to her whilom adorer Paul.

"She certainly is good-looking," said Mrs. Thorndyke.

"Oh, she is much admired. She has had scores of offers. But she adored her poor father too much to accept any of them."

"Is she your only child?" asked Jessica.

"Yes. I had a son, but he lived only a few minutes."

"How very sad!" said Jessica, with sympathy.

"Oh, I don't know," said the countess, with a manner as hard as nails. "It was a good thing for Irma. She gets the title and estates now."

Jessica offered no more consolation.

CHAPTER XIII.

AFTER dinner Irma came and seated herself beside Mrs. Thorndyke.

"You can't imagine," she began, "how pleased I am to see you. Mamma and I have heard so very much of you."

"From Paul Lorrimer?" asked Jessica, amicably.

There was a little flash in Irma's eyes.

"From your amiable cousin,—yes," she said.

"He is not really my cousin, you know," said Jessica, "but we call him so, as he is a great friend of ours, and was a cousin of—my husband." She stumbled over the name, which she had hardly ever been obliged to use before.

"Ah, yes, your romantic story is known to us," said Irma, with her great eyes fixed on the other's face.

Jessica hastened to change the subject.

"I am hoping to hear you sing," she said. "Paul has told us about your lovely voice."

"It is lovely," assented Irma, modestly. "It has quite a phenomenal range,—two octaves and five notes. But I sing no more since my dear papa is dead."

"Oh, forgive me!" exclaimed the warm-hearted Jessica. "I understand."

From under her drooping eyelids the serpentine countess was taking in every detail of the face and figure of the woman whom she conceived to be her rival. It was not without an agonizing twinge of anger and jealousy that she inwardly confessed that the young American was far more lovely than herself.

"I hope that we shall see something of one another this winter," she said, graciously, in spite of her thoughts. "You stay for some months, I believe?"

"Yes; until the spring," said Jessica.

In the mean time the lady who belonged to the oldest family in Berlin was studying every detail of Lily Hilton's charming dinner-dress. She picked gently at the steel embroideries, and asked with the simplicity of a child where this *wunderschön* fabric was made. The gray slippers, too, created not a little excitement. Lily was requested to put out her foot, that they might be examined. She explained that Swedish kid slippers were the latest fashion in Paris.

"So!" said the old lady, simply. "I thought they were *tennis shoes*."

On the whole, the evening was a pleasant one, though Jessica came away feeling that Countess Irma was not quite so friendly as she wished to appear.

"Do you know," said Mrs. Thorndyke, as she sat with her sister over the fire in the *salon*,—"do you know I cannot help thinking that Paul was not quite himself to-night?"

"He didn't drink much," said Lily, artlessly.

"Shocking girl! I didn't mean that," said her sister, laughing. "But he did not speak either to me or to the young countess after dinner. He did not seem pleased, somehow, at our meeting."

"I rather thought that myself. What are you going to say, Jessica, by the way, when you are asked to be Mrs. Lorrimer?"

"Oh, Lily!" And the widow blushed deeply. "What do you mean?"

"Don't pretend innocence, Beauty. Paul has meant to marry you ever since he came to Acacia Point."

Jessica was silent for a moment. Presently she gravely said, "I don't know what to think of Paul."

"Have you forgotten poor old George?" asked Lily, almost solemnly.

"No," said Jessica, sadly, "but he has forgotten me."

At that moment, eleven o'clock in Berlin, five o'clock in New York, "poor old George" was walking briskly up-town from his office. The city was in a state of slush and mud, it having showered the day before. The lamps were lit, and their rays were reflected in the myriad puddles produced by the usual thaw after the usual frost. As George waded along, deftly picking his way among these traps for the unwary, he was thinking, not of Jessica, but of the great question of International Copyright which was then agitating a small part of the community. If, as some people said, there were really going to be a Congress in the spring for the furtherance of copyright and its interests, he had good hope of being sent abroad as a delegate. Though George was able to make himself cheerful and happy wherever his lot might be cast, he was certainly happier in Europe than in America. Though he cared too little whether his hats were unfashionable and his coats shabby, he was quite sensible of the delights of civilization. In Germany he was taken for a Berliner; in France, for a Parisian. He was thoroughly American in his patriotism, and cosmopolitan in his tastes and power of enjoyment.

He was rather a remarkable young man, this. Though I have slighted him and bestowed a good deal of time on Lorrimer and the rest, I have felt all the while that George was worthy of more notice than we have taken of him. He was remarkable for several reasons. First, he was never known to speak a disrespectful word of a woman, nor to tell a ribald story, nor to sing a song which could not be sung in the presence of his mother and sisters. (Whether this is remarkable or not I leave young men to decide.) Second, he was a Christian without cant or pretence. Third, he had really fine tastes and an exceedingly clever tongue in his head. Fourth, he was not only a man's man but a woman's man, and had not a shadow of humbug about him, liking rather to show his worst side, and leaving one to discover or not, as the case might be, what he really was. Faults he had, but no vices, and a heart so soft that he was always afraid that somebody might find it out.

As he walked through the mud in the dusk, his brain busily revolving the question of copyright, it occurred to him that he would stop and call on one of his friends who lived on the way. He was always welcome wherever he went, and to-night he thought he could manage to disembarass his feet of a pound or two of mud before entering the drawing-room. This friend of his was a Mrs. Hale, the mother of the conceited attaché.

She was at home, and received him with cordiality. Before long she was talking about Mrs. Thorndyke.

"The beautiful widow has arrived in Berlin, and has already attracted attention, Teddy writes me," she said. "Paul Lorrimer is in attendance, and one may imagine the end."

"What end?" said George, feigning stupidity, which was a favorite game of his.

"Why, of course he wants the Thorndyke money. It will be no less welcome with Jessica attached," said Mrs. Hale. "What makes you so dense?"

"Editing a paper, I suppose," said Carroll, gravely. "If ever I start a 'society column,' will you edit it, Mrs. Hale?"

"You mean I am a gossip? Ah, George, when you are as old as I am, perhaps you will enjoy a little scandal too."

"There was no scandal in what you told me. Tell me some more."

"About Jessica? Oh, she has blossomed out, and is making up for all the hard times they have been through. She is a fine girl, I think: don't you?"

"Very; but I suppose this money will spoil her."

"I don't see why. She is very generous, they say."

"Well, I hope she will be happy. Now tell me something about your own doings." And that was the end of Jessica that day.

Not, however, as regarded thoughts. Copyright at last had a rival, and Carroll's mind clung tenaciously to that pleasant picture of Mrs. Thorndyke, with Lorrimer in attendance.

He went on living his life, however,—went to balls a good many, and dinners not a few. Girls said he was rude, but they liked him.

One day he did a very foolish thing. He had some new photographs taken, to please one of his sisters, who was going away. When they came home he took one and sent it, without explanation of any sort, to Jessica Thorndyke.

How that photograph fulfilled its mission we shall learn hereafter.

CHAPTER XIV.

TIME passed very quickly for the Hiltons that winter. They saw a great deal, and met a good many people. They made pilgrimages to Potsdam, Charlottenburg, and other points of interest. They drove in the Thiergarten, explored the museum, and saw operas and plays without number.

Lily made the acquaintance of several wonderful old professors, who had dubious linen, shocking hats, gingham umbrellas, and a world-wide reputation. She also met a certain gay and charming captain of hussars, who became assiduous in his attentions to—Mrs. Hilton.

Mrs. Thorndyke was much stared at whenever she appeared in public. When the snow came, Paul procured for her the most beautiful low Russian sleigh to be had for money, and in this she would speed along through the frosty air, half buried in long black fur, which made her rose-leaf cheeks look brighter than ever by contrast.

The papers at last got hold of her story, and published a lengthy description of her,—her romantic wedding, her beauty, her money. The result was that letters came from all parts of the empire, and from Austria, and even from Hungary and Bohemia, written by various enterprising persons who had more audacity than fortune. Some were from chambermaids in hotels who had aspirations more soaring than their condition seemed to warrant. Would the *Gnädigē Frau* give of her abundance just a little, a very little fortune, that they might retire from the active practice of bedmaking? One was from a young man who wanted only six thousand pounds that he might marry the object of his

affections, who had an obdurate father. And, crowning illustration of what human nature will do and dare, one gentleman, who lived on the Rhine, wrote a long letter, describing himself as well-born and handsome, but indigent, and inviting the lovely widow to mate her millions with his beauty in holy matrimony! Lorrimer duly translated these epistles, much to Jessica's amusement and amazement, for she had never dreamed that human nature could boast such prodigies of impudence as the writers of them.

In America one young lady in the West had written demanding a wedding trousseau; but this was the first occasion on which she had received an offer of marriage from an unknown man.

By this time Jessica's wealth had ceased to be a novelty. She was a little tired of having more than she knew what to do with, and realized some of the inconveniences peculiar to having great possessions. A scheme for ridding herself of her superfluity was working in her brain, and was to bear fruit in the future.

She was resolved that no one should seek Lily on account of her sister's millions, and let every one—especially the captain of hussars—understand that she did not intend to give her sister a dowry. The captain was a remarkably nice young fellow, well-born and good-looking. In Europe courtships do not take long, and after some attentions bestowed on Mrs. Hilton, and a few decorous conversations with the sprightly Lily in the presence of either Jessica or her mother, the captain—who was also a *Freiherr*—asked permission to marry Miss Hilton. The mere fact that he had selected her instead of her sister was something in his favor. Mrs. Thorndyke thought Lily behaved with great discretion. She was making such progress with German that she could look forward to living in Germany without fear. Then, her soldierly Prussian was gentle and brave, and had kindled a romantic flame in her untrammelled American heart. However, she steadfastly refused to give an answer until the spring, which was now approaching.

Jessica gave her much sweet counsel and sympathy. She was unusually tender and subdued in those days, with a yearning look in her eyes which puzzled and annoyed Paul Lorrimer. Theodore's millions had not brought contentment. Paul, himself, spent rather a wretched winter. Tortured on the one hand by the unvarying friendliness of Jessica, whom he loved with a force hitherto unknown to him, goaded on the other by the taunts and violent outbreaks of Irma, the nature of whose strange hold upon him was a secret to all but themselves, he knew very little peace.

One afternoon in March, when hints of spring were beginning to be felt even in that Northern climate, the young countess more than ordinarily enraged Lorrimer.

Her fits of jealousy and love alternated with times of coldness and calm threats. Whatever the bond between this man and woman might be, the links appeared to be wearing out. Presently Paul rose up in his wrath, which was as still and white as Irma's was flushed and violent.

"You are making my life so very disagreeable," he said, "that if we were any more closely connected I don't think that I could endure it. All this brutal bullying of yours has made me hate you. I curse

the day when you first tempted me to be a scoundrel and put myself in your power."

"I tempt you?" she said, with a grating laugh. "What a mistake! It was you, Mr. Lorrimer, who had your little plans ready, and I who gave you courage to carry them out. You are not a very clever scoundrel."

"Perhaps not," he said, looking at her with a sort of loathing. "At all events, not clever enough to be your husband."

"Ah," she said, "that is my affair. If you suit me——"

She came a little nearer, and laid her hand on his arm. He shook her off.

"But I do not," he said, firmly. "It is altogether a mistake. For heaven's sake, Irma, let me go. I do not love you any more."

"I see that," she said, with a sort of fierce self-control. "I am neither deaf nor blind, and you do not take pains to deceive me."

"And I do love," he went on, as though she had not spoken, "some one else."

"I know that, too," said Irma.

She was quiet now, and looked worn out with the struggle.

"Listen," said Paul, sitting down, and motioning her to a seat beside him. "I have something to propose."

"Not marriage?" asked Irma, satirically.

"No; that is out of the question."

"Yet it is not every American who can marry a countess," suggested Irma.

"No," assented Paul; "it is not every American who wants to."

Irma actually smiled, but coldly. Her fury had subsided.

"What I wish to propose is this: I will give you the money which I got for that cursed deed——"

"You said that you got none."

"I lied," said Paul, with the tone of a man who was tired of explaining.

The countess threw up her hands, with a brief ejaculation in her mother-tongue. Then she turned to Lorrimer with a strange mixture of mockery and surprise in her face.

"Is it that you die to-night, my friend, that we have these strange truths?"

"I don't know," said Paul, with a sort of dull weariness. "Perhaps. I don't care."

"Go on," said the countess. "My amiable mamma will be here soon. Make haste."

"As you care so much for money, you may have it—— if you will keep quiet."

He turned his dark eyes upon her, and looked straight into her own. Irma moved uneasily, but her gaze did not falter.

"That, you know," she said, with a little flippant laugh, "I can never do. It is not my nature."

"Very well," said Paul, quietly. "I know as much about you as you do of me,—rather more. It will be a scandalous nut for Berlin society to crack."

"The Berliners are not so simple as you believe," she said. "They would not listen. Now give me the rest of your charming programme."

"What a wonderful woman you are!" he exclaimed, in spite of himself.

"And yet you do not marry me."

"No; you are too wonderful."

"Well, what is the plan?"

"The rest of it is, . . . I am going to ask Mrs. Thorndyke to be my wife."

"Ah!" said Irma, with a sort of passing shudder; "you will, will you?"

"That is my intention," said Paul, with decision.

"No wonder you can afford to give me a little money. Will she accept you, do you think?"

"Probably not; but I mean to ask her."

"You are kind to prepare me so gently. You are not such a brute, after all."

She said this with a kind of deadly pleasantry which was enough to freeze a timid man's blood. But Paul was not timid.

"I hope," said he, politely, "that I shall become less and less brutal under the kindly influence of——" But the name stuck in his throat.

"I suppose that you will see her to-night," said Irma, also politely. Then, as the old countess's step was heard at the door, she added, "Tell her that I will call on her early to-morrow morning."

And, as the Gräfin entered, Lorrimer left the room.

CHAPTER XV.

AFTER a dinner eaten quite alone and embittered at each mouthful by his own reflections, Paul carried out his plan of calling on Mrs. Thorndyke. It would be unnecessary to describe his thoughts as he drove to the Hohenzollern-Strasse. By the time he reached the house he felt thoroughly unhinged and ready to do anything reckless and foolish. He was shown into the *salon*, where the servant told him that he would find Mrs. Thorndyke alone. The room was not brilliantly lighted, yet he paused on the threshold with a look of dazzled bewilderment, for standing beside the fireplace, with her arm resting on the mantel-piece, was the most lovely woman he had ever seen. It certainly was Jessica,—but Jessica transformed, sublimated, glorified into something more exquisite than she had ever been before.

She wore a gown of some diaphanous black fabric, whose long, loose folds clung about her like a dark cloud. Her bodice was low, and displayed such arms and shoulders as one does not see every day. Besides this, she was blazing with diamonds. They seemed to illuminate the darker corners of the room with their scintillations. Round her white throat glittered a collar of gems. A mass of brilliants

blazed on her corsage, and an aigrette no less sparkling sprang lightly from her black waving hair.

As Jessica turned to speak to him, Paul felt a wave of passion, misery, and hope flow over him. Who would not risk all to possess the love of this wonderful creature?

"Don't be frightened!" said Jessica, laughing, as she saw his bewilderment. "I am not mad, only trying on the finery in which I am to sit for my portrait to-morrow."

"I certainly thought you had come from another sphere," said Paul, trying to echo her laugh, and coming nearer to the gorgeous vision.

"Mamma and Lily are at the opera, and I am playing at royalty all by myself. How do you like the Thorndyke diamonds?" she said.

"I never cared much for them till now," answered Paul, taking her hand. Then, with an irresistible impulse, he bent his head and lightly touched it with his lips.

"No German customs, if you please," said Jessica, smiling. "Take that very comfortable chair on the other side of the fire."

He seated himself, never taking his eyes from her face.

"I think I never saw anything so bewildering as you are to-night, Jessica," he said, in a grave tone quite different from his ordinary voice.

"Ah, fine feathers make fine birds," she said, frankly enjoying his admiration. "Dress makes a vast difference, does it not?"

She had sat down in her chair, and was leaning slightly towards him, the firelight meanwhile turning her diamonds into rubies and throwing a ruddy glow over her white skin.

"Dress?" he said, impatiently. "No! It makes very little difference what you wear. Do you know how—how—*maddening* you are, Jessica?"

She drew back a little.

"That is not a nice word to apply to me, Paul," she replied. "I don't want to madden anybody."

"There is no use in trying to talk commonplaces to-night," he exclaimed, with sudden vehemence. "I came here with a definite purpose. I might as well tell you what it was."

"Oh, it is a pity to be too definite, I think," said Mrs. Thorndyke, rather nervously. "Let us talk of something else."

"How like a woman!" he said, with a slow, bitter smile. "You goad us on by every word and look,—and then——"

"Let us talk of something else."

"Don't you know that is impossible? You *must* hear me."

Paul had never been so excited and wanting in self-control. He felt that Jessica shrank from him, and tried to regain the mastery of himself.

"Jessica," he continued, more quietly, "don't you know that I love you?"

She had sunk back in her chair, as he bent further towards her. She was a little paler, and her breath came quickly.

"I did not know, Paul," she said; then she added, honestly, "Sometimes I thought so."

"You *did* see it. I did not mean to trouble you until—until *he*

had been dead a year, at least : it seemed indecent to speak sooner. But it is almost a year, Jessica, is it not?"

He got up and leaned against the mantel-piece, with his head bent towards her.

"Yes," she said, simply, "almost."

There is something infectious in passion as strong as Paul's, and his sudden outburst was sweeping away Jessica's usual common sense.

He saw that he was making an impression, and followed it up rapidly.

"There has not been a day since my visit that I have not loved you," he went on, earnestly : "ever since those days at Acacia Point I have felt that you were the only woman on earth for me."

Some sudden hardening influence seemed to come over her.

"And Countess Irma——?" she asked.

Paul started, with a sudden stab of surprise going through him.

"I hate her!" he said, fiercely.

The spell was broken. Jessica was once more herself.

"Did you always hate her?" she asked, calmly.

"Who has been telling you anything about her?" he demanded.

"Nobody."

"Then I do not understand why you have brought her name into our conversation to-night."

"If it has made you angry, I am sorry."

"Let it pass. Why should I think of her? You have imagined—— No, I will tell you the truth : I once thought I loved her, but I knew when I saw you that it was not so."

He turned and walked up and down the room for a moment or two.

"I know what a foolish thing I am doing," he went on. "When a poor man wants to marry a rich woman, one knows what every one will say. But I swear that the money is nothing to me."

"Pray leave out all mention of my money, Paul," she interposed. "It sickens me."

He paused in his walk and stood still before her.

"Then you believe——" he said,—"*oh, Jessica! my darling! you believe that I love you,—you and nothing else?*"

"Yes, Paul, I believe you," she answered, simply.

He was perplexed by her manner. It had neither the coldness of utter indifference nor the warmth of reciprocal feeling. She was very gentle, very quiet, but he felt no hope.

"Then what is your answer?" he asked, with infinite tenderness.

He held out his hand to her.

"Will you trust me, Jessica?"

She got up and stood close to him, but she made no movement towards the outstretched hand.

"I cannot tell you to-night," she said, in a low voice, with her eyes bent down. "I am very stupid,—very foolish,—but I—don't know."

Paul Lorrimer was what women call "fascinating." It is not always an attribute of the very best men ; and Paul had it in perfection.

He would not accept Jessica's gentle repulse at first. He talked

long and winningly to her. What he said shall be spared the reader. It was what all eloquent lovers say. We have all heard or said it some time in our lives, and it need not be repeated.

Still, he left her unconvinced.

A good woman's instinct is a wonderful thing; and Jessica's warned her not to decide hastily. There had been a time when she would have said "Yes" to Paul Lorrimer's momentous question. But that time was over; and deep down in her heart was some subtle influence at work, which seemed to hold her back from the final plunge.

"To-morrow," she said, "you may come; but do not hope."

"May I kiss you good-night?" asked Paul, meekly.

"No, certainly not," said Jessica.

He took this rebuff with apparent resignation and left her with a long hand-clasp.

Mrs. Thorndyke was more upset than she would have cared to own. A man like Lorrimer does not see a woman every day for months on an intimate and friendly footing without making some very strong impression.

Jessica could not tell why Irma von Wolfenfels's name had occurred to her at that moment. She had spoken it more as an experiment, and its instantaneous effect upon Paul convinced her that there was something in her suspicions. Before Lily and Mrs. Hilton returned from the opera, she escaped to her own room. On her dressing-table was an envelope bearing the American postmark. She opened it, and drew forth a photograph. Before her were the thoughtful forehead, the grave honest eyes, the strong gentle face, of—George Carroll.

The question was answered.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE next morning, faithful to her threat, Countess Irma went to call on Mrs. Thorndyke. She found her sitting with her mother and sister in the *salon* after their twelve-o'clock breakfast. She spoke graciously to all three, especially to her victim, as she considered Jessica, and said at once that she had come not only for the pleasure of seeing Mrs. Thorndyke, but to impart to her something of importance.

"Then," said Mrs. Hilton, rising, "my daughter Lily and I will leave you."

"Thanks," said Irma, suavely. "I am sorry to break up this charming family group, but——"

"I quite understand," said Mrs. Hilton; and she and Lily left the room.

"Pray take this chair," said Jessica. "I think you will find it comfortable." She felt in some dim inexplicable way that this visit was directly connected with Paul.

Irma seated herself languidly, and Jessica took an arm-chair a short distance from her.

"Mr. Lorrimer was here last evening," observed the countess, blandly, by way of opening the conversation.

"Is that what you came to tell me?" asked Jessica, smiling. "I was here and saw him."

"Of course. So I supposed," said Irma.

"Is that all?" asked Jessica, to whom the conversation was becoming ludicrous.

"That," said the young countess, "is the beginning."

"Pray explain. You are making me very curious."

"I came not to arouse curiosity, but to satisfy it. . . . Mr. Lorrimer asked you last night to be his wife? *Nicht wahr?*"

"Really," said Jessica, haughtily, "you amaze me."

"I am rude, am I not? But I fear I must be ruder still. Tell me, I beg, madame, what answer did you make to him?"

"Have you any right to ask me that question?" asked Jessica, sternly.

"Every right," said the other, firmly, with a flash in her violet-gray eyes. "The best of rights. He is promised to me."

"He certainly did not say so," said Mrs. Thorndyke, trying to speak coolly in spite of the countess's calm insolence.

"Perhaps he has changed his mind. One may do that and still be forced to keep one's word," said Irma, airily. "When you hear what I have to tell of Paul, you will not care to see him again."

"I have no desire to know any of my cousin's secrets," said Jessica, stiffly.

"Your cousin! You call him cousin, still? Well, I must tell his secret, even if you care nothing for it."

Mrs. Thorndyke maintained a scornful silence, and Irma proceeded:

"You will not claim Mr. Lorrimer as a relative, perhaps, when you know that he is dishonorable,—what you call, I think, a 'scoundrel.' Is that the right word?"

"It is evidently the word you want," said Jessica. "Go on." ("Thank God," she was saying to herself, "that I do not love him!")

"This story which I have to tell is not a pretty one; but many things not at all pretty must be told. This is one."

She spoke as if her lips were very dry, and her cheeks and eyes bore evidence that she was suffering from fever induced by her suppressed agitation.

"A year ago, when the American minister was at home on leave, Paul was made *chargé-d'affaires*. You knew it?"

Jessica nodded.

"Well, there was an old man in Berlin, an American, who was going to the Holy Land. He had a grand scheme for sending the Jews back to Jerusalem: one is sorry that it did not succeed, as we should not miss them!—however, it came to nothing, as you shall see. He left his will, this old man,—Trowbridge was his name,—with Paul at the Legation. No one else knew what was in it. Mr. Trowbridge went on his journey and died in Palestine. Now came the time for the charitable Jewish scheme to be carried out; but——" She paused, and passed her black-bordered handkerchief over her dry lips.

"Go on!" said Jessica, imperiously.

"I will; but talking scandal of one's neighbor makes the tongue stick," said Irma, apologetically.

"It was our friend's bad luck to meet the nephews of this Trowbridge just then," she continued. "They were not in the will; Paul was in need of money, and so he sold it to them."

"Sold what?" cried Jessica, astounded.

"The will," said Irma, still blandly.

She looked at Jessica, to see whether this last crushing blow had told on her, but she saw only astonishment and horror, not the agony of wounded love she had expected and hoped to see.

"Do you mean to say," cried Jessica, excitedly, "that Paul Lorrimer so dishonored himself as to—to——"

"Yes," said Irma, looking down, with a slight flush of shame on her hard face, "he cheated the poor Jews out of their funds for the rebuilding of Jerusalem, and got a good round sum for holding his tongue. He would have deceived me," she added, raising her eyes and grinding her teeth melodramatically: "he pretended that he had received nothing."

"And *you* want to marry that man?" Jessica's round startled eyes saw, as she gazed at Irma, another figure which had entered unobserved. It was Paul Lorrimer.

He heard her last words, her tone of abhorrence, he saw these two women, both of whom he had in a way deceived, and he knew that his hour was come. He came forward with the same sort of courage which is so often shown by men on the gallows or at the guillotine. Completely ignoring Irma's presence, he approached Jessica, who had sprung to her feet. His face looked quite aged and worn.

"I came for my answer," he said, without any visible emotion, "and I think I have it."

"Oh, Paul!" cried Jessica, almost piteously, "my dear cousin, is this true?"

"What that woman has been telling you? Yes, Jessica, it is all true."

His firmness faltered, and he bent his head so that her clear eyes might not read the shame in his face. To his surprise, she covered her own face with her hands and burst into tears.

"My darling," he cried, springing to her side and trying to take her hand, "my darling, do you care?"

But she motioned him away.

"Oh, the pity, the horror of it!" she sobbed, brokenly. "To think that you could ask me——"

She did not finish the sentence, but Paul shuddered as if she had stabbed him. His punishment was sufficiently severe.

As for Irma von Wolfenfels, she stood in the background, regarding her two victims with a mocking face like that of Mephistopheles in the immortal story. She had not spoken yet. Presently she said,—

"Have I not kept my promise?"

Paul turned upon her such a terrible regard that she faltered and changed color:

"Did you tell her who advised me to commit this crime? who

aided and encouraged me? who said 'she could not marry a poor man'?"

Jessica stopped sobbing, and looked from one to the other of this guilty pair.

"Go away!" she said to Irma, imperatively. "I will not have you here. Your presence is hateful to me."

"And your cousin? Have you forgiven him already?" asked Irma, diabolically.

"Whatever I have done or may do is nothing to you," said Jessica, haughtily, and she pointed to the door.

With an attempt at a smile, Countess Irma swept from the room, and Paul and Jessica were alone.

At first it seemed as if neither could speak. Paul stood with his arms crossed on the mantel-piece, and his face buried in them.

Jessica went and laid her hand gently on his shoulder.

"Don't touch me," he murmured. "I am unworthy of it."

"I want you to tell me everything yourself," she said. "Come! Take courage. It is very dreadful, but perhaps I can help you."

The brutality of Irma had turned Jessica's sympathies in the direction of the poor sinner who hid his face from her honest eyes.

"But I have lost you! I have lost you!" he almost moaned.

"Yes, but it could never have been otherwise," she said, kindly. "I do not love you. I never have."

As she said this at last, aloud, an exulting warmth and happiness seemed to suffuse her whole being. For in this declaration was involved another,—her love for some one else.

"My poor cousin," she went on, "trust me. No one shall ever know all this from me; but tell me how you could ever do this thing; and how, oh, Paul, *how* could you, knowing it yourself, ask me to be your wife?"

The reproach conveyed in her words made the unhappy man wince.

"I must have been mad; and she—that—" he clinched his fist,— "that woman told me that she would come here to-day and tell you everything. But I was so weary of her threats and all this misery that I longed to put an end to it all. I had very little hope that you cared for me."

By degrees she drew from him the whole wretched story of his sin; how temptation had assailed him just at the time when he had least strength to withstand it,—when Irma had bewitched his senses and made him believe that he loved her with an enduring passion. Then he had gone to America, partly for change of air and scene, partly to arrange the final details of his crime with the Trowbridge brothers, who had left Europe and gone home. He even told Jessica the exact sum for which he had sold his soul's peace. Then he described to her, hiding nothing, how he had been disappointed in his cousin's will, and had determined, if possible, to recover the property by marrying Theodore's widow.

"But, believe me," he said, earnestly, "before I had known you a week I loved you as I do now,—for yourself."

When his recital was ended, Jessica leaned back for a few moments

in silence. Presently she said, "Do not think me cruel, Paul, when I say that I will not see you again. One or the other of us must leave Berlin.

"In one way I think I can help you; but I require time and thought. Leave me now. I will write to you." She rose and held out her hand. "May God forgive you?" she said, solemnly. "I believe that you are penitent."

She would not listen to his protestations, but allowed him to kiss her hand, and then he left her.

The next day he received the following note:

"MY DEAR PAUL,—I have sent directions to my lawyer in New York to make over to you a sum of money which I have told him I consider your due as my late husband's heir. He will accept that explanation. You are to return *what was given you a year ago*, so that one great weight will be removed from your conscience. The money over and above this debt is what you are entitled to as Theodore's cousin. I was arranging this division of the property when this trouble came; and I want no thanks. *Please* do not try to see me again.

Yours sincerely,

"J. H. T."

CHAPTER XVII.

THE events of the last few days had shaken Jessica exceedingly, and her one desire was to get away from Berlin as soon as possible. There were one or two things to be done before leaving, the most important of which was the finishing of the portrait. This was hurried on, and absolutely completed much sooner than the artist had expected. In truth, he was loath to part with the beautiful picture.

It was impossible to conceal wholly from Mrs. Hilton and Lily what had occurred. Jessica explained as much as she honorably could, and they were forced to appear content. As for Paul, after one brief letter of impassioned thanks and blessings for Mrs. Thorndyke's princely generosity towards him, he was heard of no more by the Hiltons, for that time at least.

Jessica declared her intention of going to England for the summer. Her mother was pleased at the prospect, especially as her second-cousin's husband had just been appointed minister to that country. The little lady was becoming weary of German manners and customs, and longed to hear her own language spoken about her once more. Lily shed some tears at parting from her soldier-love; but, as she promised to marry him in the summer, she was not inconsolable.

Arrived in London, the party did not go to one of the enormous hotels so much affected by Americans with more money than discrimination. Mrs. Thorndyke, having been instructed and advised by "one who knew" what he was talking about, secured rooms in a modest, unpretending, and very expensive hotel in one of the streets which branch off from Piccadilly. Nothing could be greater than the difference between this house and the great caravansaries which have been so

much patronized of late years. In the latter there was always a *menu* much fuller than any unhappy individual ever became after daringly partaking of all the dishes named in it. At Jessica's quiet abode, on the contrary, one seldom saw a *menu*, but one was comfortably fed. To be sure, there was no gas, there were no electric lights,—the blaze so dear to the ordinary American heart,—neither were there many bathrooms where hot baths were to be had at all hours without trouble to anybody. But there were plenty of lamps and candles, and housemaids who had not yet emigrated and become too lady-like to carry water-cans or coals.

The front windows had flower-boxes in them, and there was an atmosphere of home about the place,—an atmosphere which cost about five guineas a week per head, with nothing else thrown in.

London was as charming and as sooty as ever. The air was full of blacks, and the streets were as neat as a billiard-table, and almost as smooth,—the exact opposite of New York, where one might live most comfortably in a balloon. The florists' windows were piled high with spring flowers,—layers of glowing daffodils and masses of pale primroses. In St. James's Park the ducks were bobbing and quacking and jerking their tails, enjoying the spring weather. The turf was richly green, and the trees were uncurling their fresh leaves in the transient bursts of sunshine which favored them.

The beautiful youths of Bond Street and Piccadilly and Mayfair in general were not yet in all their strength and glory. They were, for the most part, spending the Easter holidays out of town, and the season had not fairly begun. But there were hints of approaching gayety and delight in the air. The great houses were taking off their brown holland pinafores and cleaning themselves generally, the shopkeepers were preparing their most seductive wares, the flowers were bursting into bloom in the parks and the jardinières, and, in short, everything was beginning all over again, as it has done for many a year past, and will do, probably, for many a year to come.

Saddened as Jessica was by her late awful discovery of Paul's dishonor, all the novelty and beauty of the great city cheered and fascinated her. Then, in the very bottom of her heart, was the knowledge that Carroll had not forgotten her.

It happened, as we have said, that Mrs. Hilton's cousin had married a lawyer, who had somehow been made minister to the court of St. James; and this was the only link between Jessica and the fashionable world. When the minister's wife saw her beautiful relative arrive at the Legation for a call, she ejaculated, inwardly, "Another woman who wants to be presented!"

But the good, overworked lady's fears were laid to rest by Jessica's voluntary assurance that she came asking no favors and expecting none.

"If you knew, my dear," said the minister's wife, quite plaintively, "what swarms of Americans are in London, you would pity me. If they can't get any one else to present them, they fly to me. Women that one wouldn't look at at home have one overruling desire,—to go to court. I can't imagine why. What good does it do them?"

"What, indeed?" echoed Mrs. Hilton. "For my part, Louisa, the very thought frightens me."

Then Louisa gave a graphic account of how her countrywomen were crowding and pushing and overreaching one another in emulous strife; how Jennie This and Mattie That and Mrs. Jimmy Somebody else had all dined at Marlborough House; how the Prince had danced with Mrs. Thespis, though she *had* scandalized her relations by going on the stage; how the man who rode a bucking mustang at the American circus had been seen on Lord Charles So-and-So's coach in the Park, etc. The Hiltons were awed and surprised, and listened with a growing appetite for these social marvels. They came away with a confused feeling that London was even more wonderful than they had supposed, and that the invading wave of Americans seemed to be driving all before it.

The next day, Mrs. Thorndyke was walking alone in Piccadilly, running the gauntlet of many eyes, more or less impertinent and admiring, when she saw a hansom fly past, and in it was George Carroll.

So he was in London! Her heart beat loudly, and for a moment her head swam a little. There was no use in deceiving herself. She loved him more than she had imagined, and she knew at that precise moment that she never could or would love any one else.

How do women know these things?

It is one of the inexplicable phenomena of womanhood. They often *think* they know all this, but a fresh face and new charms reverse their decision.

Jessica went directly back to the hotel and up into her sitting-room. There Lily sat reading. Into her sister's lap Jessica threw her head, as the rest of her reclined at her feet, and promptly burst into tears.

"What in the world is the matter, Beauty?" cried Lily. "Are you hurt? Has any one insulted you? What is the matter?"

"Oh, Lily," sobbed Mrs. Thorndyke, "he is in London,—George is in London, and—I have just seen him, . . . and he hasn't tried to find me!"

Lily looked down on the black head with a half smile as she stroked it fondly.

"So it is true? You do love George? I am so glad!" she said, softly.

"Why should I love him? What has he ever done to make me love him?" cried Jessica, sharply. The black head hereupon popped up, and two streaming, lugubrious eyes gazed at Lily.

"He's just the best man you know," said Lily. "That's all."

"Then why," said Beauty, with an irrelevancy not uncommon among the fair sex,—"*why* has he not tried to find me?"

"Because, you great beautiful baby, he has been in London just twenty-four hours," answered Lily.

"How do you know?" cried Jessica, sharply.

"Because I have seen it in the paper not an hour ago. He has come to look after his old oraze Copyright with a capital C. He will be looking for you to-day."

Beauty looked crestfallen and ashamed.

"I could almost *die* to think that even you know——" She paused and hid her head in Lily's gown.

Lily was an unselfish, affectionate girl, and considered her sister perfection.

"Is it likely, darling," she said, gravely, wiping the tears off Jessica's crimson cheek, the only one which was visible at the moment,— "is it likely that you could *not* make *any* man love you? I have always seen something in Mr. Carroll's manner which made me believe that he cared for you. He is very proud, and I think he misunderstands you. This money has come between you."

"Do you think so?" said Mrs. Thorndyke, eagerly, and jumping up with the quick lightness of youthful muscles and perfect symmetry. "Then I will get rid of it sooner than I meant to." With this eccentric utterance, she left the room, leaving Lily to marvel at this new whim.

In two weeks from that time Mrs. Westalow and Mrs. Langford received an extraordinary intimation from Mrs. Thorndyke's lawyer, stating that one-half of their late brother's fortune was to be divided between them.

Each lady welcomed this remarkable news in her own way. Mrs. Langford heard it with tears and prayers of thanksgiving, calling down the blessing of heaven on the quixotic generosity of the giver. Mrs. Westalow gave a prolonged gasp of astonishment mingled with incredulity. Then she said, "That is the decentest thing that girl has done yet. However, it belongs to me anyway. So there's not much goodness in it, after all."

Meanwhile, Jessica said nothing of what she had done, and did not yet miss the money.

Her sole desire was to see George.

CHAPTER XVIII.

As for George Carroll, he had no idea that Mrs. Thorndyke was in London.

He was distinguishing himself at the Copyright Congress, and his spare time was taken up in social pleasures. His father was a well-known ex-diplomat, and by virtue of this, and his own individual attractions, he was soon immersed in gayety.

The season had now really begun. Everything, from the flowers to the great ladies, was in full bloom. With some of the latter the bloom might be a little too fixed to be becoming, but still it all went to make the whole wonderful pageant more brilliant.

Theodore Thorndyke had been dead for thirteen months. Jessica had "taken off crape,"—such is the mysterious language of millinery,—and was now resolved to taste some of the delights which are the lawful possession of youth and beauty.

One night in May she went with Lily to a great dinner given by "Cousin Louisa," the minister's wife. Before she had been ten

minutes in the drawing-room George Carroll was shaking hands with her. She stood trembling but radiant with the brilliancy and loveliness seen only in a beautiful woman in the presence of the man she loves.

George frankly avowed his pleasure in seeing her again. He could not have told, for the life of him, how she was dressed, but he felt keenly every bewildering detail of her appearance,—the gauzy black gown glittering with jet and diamonds, the bare white arms and shoulders, the winsome young face,—above all, the expression of shy happiness on it which he had never before seen there.

By great good fortune, they sat together at dinner. The American minister had a good cook and unimpeachable wines, but little recked these two so long as they might gaze into each other's faces and speak in tones too well bred for whispers, too low for general conversation.

"The last item I saw about the 'rich and beautiful Mrs. Thorndyke,'" said George, "was in a New York paper. It said that you were in Berlin, and engaged to a Prussian officer."

"Did you believe it?" asked Beauty, mischievously. She was so happy that she could have screamed.

"No," said George. "I can't say I did."

Jessica sparkled all over her face.

"Why?" she asked, almost tenderly.

"Because," said Carroll, impudently, as was his wont, "I knew that it couldn't be any one under a duke."

Mrs. Thorndyke's face fell. "For shame!" she said, reproachfully. "You still think me mercenary."

"No, I think you very sensible. I wouldn't marry a Prussian officer if I were an American girl. You couldn't be happy in Berlin, except in the royal family. You're a queen, an empress."

"Uncrowned, and without subjects," laughed Jessica.

"What do you call that diamond tiara arrangement? And as for subjects, am I not enough?"

"Enough to make any one laugh,—yes," said Jessica. "But, seriously, my sister Lily is engaged to a Prussian, Waldemar Hardenstein, a captain in the *Garde Hussaren* at Potsdam. He is a nice fellow, and he is very happy. We like him very much."

"I know who he is, and I believe he is very nice. Is he well off?"

"Rather, I believe. He knows that Lily has nothing, for I took care to tell him so. He loves her dearly."

"I will wish her joy after dinner."

After a pause, Jessica said, almost awkwardly, "By the way, you must not tease me any more about being the 'rich Mrs. Thorndyke.' I have only a quarter of what I had when we last met."

"I hope you have not had grave losses?" He looked concerned.

"Losses,—yes," said Beauty, blushing. "But— Well, not ordinary losses. I can't explain just now."

"You certainly rouse my curiosity. Have you been founding a hospital, or a dogs' home, or what? But I am impertinent to ask."

"Perhaps I will tell you some day."

"Ah, 'some day' is never! Well, I won't be rude, as I generally am. I will be courteous and conventional for this evening."

"Oh, no," said Jessica, with a sudden gleam of the old mischief which he knew so well. "Don't take all that trouble, Mr. Carroll! *Be yourself!*"

George screamed with enjoyment of this sally, till he remembered with a sudden start of chagrin that he was not in the "Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave," but in the company of a dozen very proper English people, and had a lady of title on one side of him. Then he controlled his facial muscles, and discoursed eloquently of politics, copyright, and journalism during the rest of dinner.

That evening Jessica made a conquest of Lord Gerald Chalkley, a younger son of the Marquis of Croydon. It was not long before he sought to ally his blue blood with Mrs. Thorndyke's yellow gold; but, though his boots were flawless, his gardenias the largest to be had at any price, and his hats made by the Prince's hatters, he was gently dismissed by the American lady, for whom he had no charms. But this is not a part of our story.

From the evening of the dinner Jessica began to be known. She was never a professional beauty, her photographs did not adorn the shop-windows of Mayfair, she did not dine at Marlborough House, neither did "H. R. H." insist upon meeting her. She did not kiss her majesty's hand, nor fight for invitations to the houses of "all the best people." But she *did* go to dinners, operas, and plays. She *did* attire herself exquisitely. She had many a happy hour in and near London, and, crowning joy, she saw George Carroll nearly every day.

How proud she was of him! He was at his best in London. He was so well got up that he looked really handsome. He was so clever that the kindly English winced with surprise at his witticisms, as if a streak of American lightning had passed before them. Every one seemed to like him and to invite him to their houses. Jessica saw that money cannot give everything. George's social position was far above hers, and she recognized the fact; but it was not for this that she loved him. She loved him . . . because she loved him! Not a good reason, yet it seemed cogent enough to her.

As to George, he basked in his happiness, and weakly forgot that it might not last. He asked Beauty one day what had become of Paul Lorrimer, and her answer convinced him that there was nothing between the cousins.

Poor Paul! He sank into the power of Countess Irma, and actually married her. He was maddened by the thought of what he had lost, and she was clever enough to see that an assumed and unexacting gentleness might still subdue him. And so it was. What their life was, who can tell? Whether or not they had any happiness, whether the men who had tempted Paul ever restored their stolen gains to the object for which they had been intended, does not belong to these pages.

Lily Hilton was married in the last week of June. The wedding was necessarily a small one, as the Hiltons had very few friends in London. But the weather was fine, and the bride was happy, and all passed off well. There was no mistake possible about the nature of Waldemar's feelings. His love was disinterested, and, now that Jes-

sica was certain of this, she presented her sister not only with her wedding-outfit, but with twenty thousand pounds.

"At this rate," said she to herself, "I shall soon be poor enough to suit even George!"

After the excitement and tears of the wedding, Mrs. Hilton and Mrs. Thorndyke were glad to escape from London, where the void left by Lily's departure was painfully felt, to a delightful house in Surrey, to which they had been invited by an American lady living in England. Of course George Carroll was of the party. He was beginning to feel that this happiness could not last forever, and he actually had so little conceit, and was so robbed of his usual powers of penetration, that he did not know that Jessica loved him.

He made up his mind to fly from temptation, as he had once before done with only partial success.

She, on the other hand, was in a prolonged fever of anxiety and impatience, and resolved to find out at all hazards what his feelings were towards her.

CHAPTER XIX.

IN this frame of mind they met at their hostess's tea-table. When the social rite of tea-drinking and cake-eating was finished, George suggested a stroll in the garden. They stepped out on to the velvet lawn, and walked between beds of glowing midsummer flowers to a seat at some distance under a spreading beech-tree.

"I am tired," said Mrs. Thorndyke. "Let us rest here."

There was something almost petulant in her tone. George glanced at her quickly.

"Tired already?" he said. "You have been doing too much."

"Yes," she assented, more gently. "I think I have."

"But you have enjoyed England, haven't you?" asked George, in a conversational company-tone which drove Jessica frantic.

"Immensely," she said, dryly.

She sat down on the bench under the beech-tree, and leaned her hand against the smooth trunk behind her. George threw himself on the ground at her feet.

"One learns so much here simply by observation," he said, looking a long way off and picking absently at a little flower which grew near his hand.

"That is true of every country," said Mrs. Thorndyke, wearily.

"Yes, but we Americans think we know so much about the manners and customs of English people, until we come over. Now, I have seen a newly rich lady in New York afraid to introduce her guests to one another, because 'the *best* English people don't introduce now.' Whereas at some houses here I have been presented to a dozen persons. Then this same New York dame was painfully oppressed because at a ball I would shake hands with her. She tried to put me off with a courtesy, because, I suppose, she pictured the aristocracy all courtesying to each other. Now, nearly every person I have met has shaken hands with me."

"Our 'Anglomaniacs' are amusing. They have no idea that a man may hunt in anything but a red coat, or be married in a cut-away."

After this, the forced dialogue on international traits ceased.

Of all hours the hour before sunset is perhaps the most charming of an English summer day. This afternoon the sky was tenderly blue and cloud-dappled. The low sun struck the landscape with almost level beams, warming every object into new beauty. The house, a few hundred yards away, but partially hidden from the pair who sat under the beech-tree, lay in a sort of sloping valley between two gentle, undulating hills. The rich green of turf and foliage was yet unspoiled by summer drought, and the exquisite roses were in full bloom, half covering the house, trailing over archways, and making the standard rose-trees look like huge long-stemmed bouquets. The whole scene was very lovely and peaceful, but its influence failed to quiet Jessica. Her head was on fire, her hands were icy. She felt that so much depended on this interview.

George Carroll was thinking the same thing, but his pride was holding him back from ever (as he thought) asking this beautiful creature to be his wife.

"By the way," he said, suddenly, as though following up a train of ideas, "you said that you would tell me some day what had become of your money. Is this the day?"

Jessica colored.

"I don't know," she said, more confused than George had ever seen her. "I do not think I ought to tell. It would seem like boasting."

"Do you think I am likely to misunderstand you, after all this time?" asked Carroll.

"After our long and intimate acquaintance?" said Jessica, with a little forced laugh. Then, with sudden desperate boldness, "It is gone, that money. I gave it away."

Carroll jumped off the grass and stood up before her.

"Gave it away!" he cried. "What do you mean?"

"I mean," said Mrs. Thorndyke, blushing and trembling, but firm as a rock, now that the first plunge was over, "I mean that I was far too rich for one young woman who had never been used to much money, and I really had no right to it. So I gave away at least half."

There was absolute silence for a minute. Then George sat down at the extreme end of the bench (for he had no lounging familiar little ways, this proper young man).

"Now tell me," said he, gently, with his clear eyes fixed upon her face, "tell me exactly what you did with it."

It was a curious thing that this high-spirited young lady generally did what this dictatorial George bade her.

"Some I gave to Paul Lorrimer, but most to Mrs. Westalow and Mrs. Langford, and some—of course, a little—to dear Lily." She spoke as if she were repeating a lesson.

"You know," she added, apologetically, "I had no right to all that money, and I found that it—stood in the way of things."

She stopped and looked frightened. George's heart leaped in his breast.

"What things?" he asked, very softly, his eyes holding hers, and looking, oh, so full of a new, sweet life!

"Oh, lots of things," said Jessica, pulling absently at the button of her glove, and trying not to see George, though she couldn't help doing so, as he had unconsciously come a good deal nearer.

"Oh, you glorious darling!" he said, still softly, but with a tone which sunk into her heart. "My glorious darling!"

She said nothing, but she was panting from fear,—from joy,—heaven knows what emotion.

"Jessica," he said, "will you give me this hand—without the glove?"

She tore off the dead-black kid, and laid her hand, warm, white, living, in George's own.

"Do you know what this means?" he asked, solemnly. "Do you know that this pledges you to be my own?—my very own, Jessica? Think well what you are doing."

This was too much.

"Oh, George," she cried, "do you love me? Oh, George, George!" and in one moment her arms were folded about his neck, and two hearts, each as virgin as the other, beat together.

"What have I done?" cried Carroll, aghast, when the tingling rapture of the first long kiss was over. "I have asked a princess to marry me."

"No, you haven't," said Jessica, her great gray eyes shining through her tears. "You haven't asked anybody to marry you!" And here the tears were made into rainbows by the brilliance of her smile.

"Then I do now! This minute! Jessica, why did you give away all that money?"

She turned upon him a face of unutterable affection, and said, with unblushing effrontery,—

"Because, sir, I knew that you would not love me with all that money, because you were a proud, mistaken creature."

"Oh, Jessica! To think of my blindness, and my audacity! How can a poor hack of a journalist like me make you happy?"

"By trying to," said Jessica, almost saucily.

"Jessica," he said, solemnly, "I never loved any other woman."

"George," said she, with delicious archness, but with the tears hanging on her lashes, "you are the only man who could make me believe that."

And he, because his unstained youth had been ignorant of love-making, feared to touch his beautiful beloved, and sat looking at her with adoring eyes.

"What does it matter?" he said, presently, "whether it is much or little money? Such base things shall not come between us. I have found, under all the glitter, and beauty, and riches, all that I wanted,—a woman's heart."

"Dear, dear George!" she said. "Don't tell anybody that *I* offered myself!"

A LITTLE TREATISE ON PLAGIARISMS.

OF yore, when a tribe and a language started on life together, there must have been a great deal of tautology ; coincidences of thought and expression to perplex a young civilization before it was steady on its feet. Characters and pursuits must have resembled the modern game of word-making, where random letters of the alphabet are dealt into your hand, and where you may form an "at" or a "so" as fast as your neighbor, and from inspiration quite as direct. We allow yet for duplicated intelligence ; we practise the daily amenity of agreeing with Bugg that it is growing warmer, and with Norfolk-Howard that the temperature is rising. In the conduct of life we ape one another as we will, collide, interchange, amalgamate, twang on the same harp, jerk by the same puppet-string ; but you will observe that there is little suspicion of mockery or imitation in all that, and if one figure adopt the gait of another it is generally looked upon as nobody's business. Do I consider it a servile thing of my neighbor that he buys his dinner at the spot where I bought mine yesterday ? that he also takes mutton, for my given price per pound ? No one ever speculated how the late Mr. Shelley could afford to die at twenty-nine, by accident, when Sir John Suckling, a thistledown fellow, but a knightly and considerable poet in his day, had died at twenty-nine, by accident, before him. And if a commentator only had thought of it, how suspicious a case might be made out against a deserter who dropped his bayonet at Gettysburg, when Q. Horatius Flaccus had antedated him, with a shield, at Philippi ! Truly, to precedents of transient action we are indifferent.

The same risks are run time after time ; more than one perished upon the enemy's spears, for the sake of a shouted warning to the sleeping camp, or hoped with cheery courage, in the fangs of shipwreck ; that Heaven is as near by sea as by land ; yes ! and some sufferer after golden-hearted Sidney has passed the untasted water to lips more parched than his own. Oh, we can never have too much of that sort of repetition ! We say it uplifts, and "makes for righteousness," and carries urgings to the breast of every generous boy, for instance, who studies history. We find it worth while, thinking of him, to adduce example on example of the same kind of heroism. If he does not hear the deed accredited to some famous leader, he will come across it in the piecemeal annals of an obscure state. If he be familiar with all its citations, so much the better ; it looks as though magnanimity were a common thing, as indeed, secretly, it hath ever been, in that dim work-a-day world which looms beyond him. Or, should he suspect the first venturesome pioneer of glory to have been the inspiration and spur of those who followed, is it not very fair and honorable that it be so ? that virtue should thus multiply itself again and again, as stars are born of the bursting of a star ?

Just as it was worth while in these old stir-about hearts to repeat their fine tragedy, so that, in one way or another, the ideal and influ-

ence of it should be made plain to the world, a pleader might contend that it is not uncommendable in Mr. Pope to ransack Lucan, Boileau, Cowley, and Dryden, and insert their neat and piercing truths, like jewels reset, in his own circulatory pages. Moralists take into consideration, in case of theft of the palpable sort, whether the criminal be in dire need of that which he stole: so must we judge the distinguished fraternity of literary purveyors. Who knows what hitches may have interrupted the Essay on Man, or the gallant security—though my Lord Byron was no trained pilferer—of Childe Harold itself? Persons who write epics have been starved out of all discretion ere the end of a week's interview with the muse. Can sublime pentameters posting on towards the amelioration of mankind languish in full sight of a poor skeleton's little coffers? What a pity to have missed a brave chime of modern verse, simply because one of the forgotten choir had pealed it out too early! The art of saying over being the universal art of literature, it behooves us to frown down awkward attempts at that risky trade, and to wink at any which are clever, and serve a gentle use. Surely, it is palliation for Thomas Gray's extreme of communism that his confiscated "gem of purest ray serene," and its sisterly "flower born to blush unseen," should bring the thought of hidden beauty to thousands who never otherwise would have been consoled with an inkling of it. The abominable fallacy that the end justifies the means never looks so winning as in this light.

The miracle is, ultimately, not that we confuse our identities, but that our diversity and originality are what they are. With legs of proximate length, one walker minces, and another strides; with climatic influences to share with the tenor, the bass still sings bass; and despite the equalizing curriculum of the schools, A. evolves a romancer, and B. a geometrician! In literature, it is thrice wonderful, "and yet again wonderful, and after that, out of all whooping," that a human being should put forth anything which has not been bandied about for centuries. Writers give out, in a large sense, what they take in; and what they take in is as old as the earth, and as broad, and as free to the first comer. We each undergo the stupendous sameness of mortality, and every influence meanwhile, in the air above and the waters under, is against an elective course of mind, and for levelling, docking, and conforming.

The prime difficulty with a scrupulous poor dog of an author is to keep his head clear in the rush and anxiety of composition, and to be sure he carries off no hat nor umbrella besides his own. He wants what he believes to be his style and his subject; those which, at any rate, he has grown used to calling his. He has no objection to make a parody or modification of another's work, which is as if, having appropriated a strange hat, he returns it with a cock's feather stuck in it by way of comment. Over any matter of sober credence his fancy, without irreverence, may choose to frisk. If an Egyptian philosopher has delivered himself of solemn carven theses on the sacred leek, to-morrow's gardener may still evolve a treatise on the onion, or a featherbrain may inquire, with mock gravity, into its psychological qualities. But in general, our scrupulous gentleman disdains affiliations. His chisel

must be no reminder of its betters ; his marble must be virgin from the quarry. His is the middle course, however. For the greatest, like the forlornest short-sightedest penny-a-liner, have the grace to borrow entire statues, and, by the warrant of conquest, to cudgel them into shapes of their own. Pascal does it, without a qualm ; Shakespeare has no fear of the elder chroniclers in limning his immortal types ; Goethe has not so much as a by-your-leave to Kit Marlowe in recapturing from him his slight English spoils of the dark-veined legend of Doctor Faustus. It behooves genius, perhaps, to be bolder and more swaggering than your little gracious aptitudes.

Note the nice degrees of the profession. The real pettiness of plagiarizing lies not so much in confiscating another's belongings, as in disguising or counterfeiting them ; in throwing over them any grace or gusto whatsoever, in the hope of disentangling one's self from suspicion. If there were a law to grapple fitly with such offences, a pretty showing the belaudelled crew would make in a police court ! But there are robberies so statesmanlike that their recital throws the hearer into an enthusiasm. Mr. Breen, in "Modern English Literature, its Blemishes and Defects," cites some astonishing charges against great names from Nodier's "Questions de Littérature Légale." Quérard, too, affords a lesser list : "M. Langlès, the Orientalist, stealing his *Voyage d'Abdoul Rizzac* from Galland's *Arabian Nights* ; Lefebvre de Villebrune, in his translation of *Athenæus*, copying six thousand two hundred notes from Casaubon's critical works ; De Saint-Ange, in his translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, borrowing about fifteen hundred verses from Thomas Corneille, and a still greater number from Malfillâtre ; Jacques Delille, in his translation of Virgil, his poem of *l'Imagination*, and other works, appropriating a great number of lines from other poets ; Malte Brun, in his famous work on geography, literally adopting the remarks of Gosselin, Lacroix, Walckenaer, Pinkerton, Puissant, etc. ; Aignan, in his translation of the *Iliad*, borrowing twelve hundred verses from a previous translation by Rochefort : Castil Blaze transferring to his Dictionary of Modern Music three hundred and forty notices from Rousseau's work on the same subject, and all the while abusing the latter for his ignorance of the principles of the art ; Henri Beyle, under the assumed name of Bombet, publishing his well-known letters on Haydn and Italian music, and leaving the public unacquainted with the fact that he had merely translated them from the Italian of Joseph Carpani ; and, lastly, the Count de Courchamps palming on the world as the *Mémoires Inédits de Cagliostro* a series of tales which turned out, after all, to be but a literal transcript of a romance published some twenty years before by John Potocki, a Polish count." Now these be, in the main, the sins of Thackeray's "Mossoo," but they reflect lustre on our common humanity : calm, courageous invasions of a neighbor's territory, a brazen seizure of castles, and kidnapping of guards and serving-folk ; not leaving so much as the family cat on the old hearthstone, or last year's acorn sprouting in promise under my lady's boudoir casement. There is something sinewy, imperial, gothic, in such thefts. And they are out of the capability of any but your true artist.

Aside from these rank Charles-Readean naughtinesses, it is most interesting to verify the quasi-genealogy of men of genius, or the odd consanguinity between sundered contemporaries. Brahms puts into a symphony the thought which Browning puts into a drama,—the same lofty vigor, incisiveness, and odd, compelling sweetness of manner. If it should strike you betimes that Leigh Hunt, one of the most delightful essayists that “heaven’s air in this huge rondure hemmed,” bears occasionally a strong relationship to Sir Thomas Browne, a very different sort of person, how pleasant is it to discover that Hunt somewhere alludes to the mystical doctor as “mine ancestor”! Now, in this same honorable and honoring sense, waiving any recognition of it on their own part, Longfellow was somewhat beholden for all that was, properly speaking, most his own, to Henry Vaughan; and Thoreau, the “indigenous New-Englander,” to the antipodal excellence of Bishop Jeremy Taylor: which last is most provable of all paradoxes. We may cite a chance line from our Lowell,

Far-heard thro’ Pyrenean valleys cold,

or another from Swinburne,

Thro’ darkness and the disenchanted air,

and smile, remembering Keats. But these are instances of relationship, the negation and happy converse of plagiarism.

The benison of Donatus, that “ingenious saint,” is in many mouths, “The deuce take them that said our good things before us!” and rises to the lips of every vassal of Apollo at some point or other of his wearisome road. Sir Walter Scott records the horrified indignation of the Ettrick Shepherd, to whom books and pens were equally strange fish, at hearing from divers illustrious ancient quartos the self-same passages which he had freshly fathered before the world!

If there be anything more trying than to discover what is literally your soul’s secret figuring abroad, while you were settling down to indite every syllable of it, it is to find afterwards a garbled, unsuspected version of your theme in a publication antedating your proper works! And the sting of it is that, nine times out of ten, your favorite author (*optime et dulcissime frater!*) thus maltreats you; always in the only book of his which you had not read at the hour of your rashness, always in language which is yours sweetened, strengthened, and glorified. Who would not chafe at the foregone confiscation of titles, even, involving the suppression of divers charming periods which had to do with them? The remembrance of what we have undergone from the tomes of certain extant incomparables makes our blood run backward. And, ah! that it should be your favorite author aforesaid who plays you this scurvy trick! Your attitude is that of a worshipper with his red, angry fist in the idol’s face. Your mind is distraught: you salute and accuse, love and protest, pray and jeer. How valiantly you could have done such and such a thing, and how mean it was of your ungrateful god to covet your pathetic little privilege, and to forestall you!

What a burden he makes of your life! dancing before you at noonday, the mocking royal shadow of yourself, an humble citizen! Beshrew the day, — — (late enough was it, in all conscience!), that ever I knew thee. Would that thine elvish pages had been Chinese script, or that there had been no King's English in mine eye! Best-loved and least-read, avault! Thou art crueller than Domitian to his fly. I win a toy-battle: behold! mine armory is searched for thy campaign-plans; I quench my thirst forty leagues from home, and some jackanapes of a critic arresteth me for a drinker at thy fountain! All that I might have been, — —, be it on thy handsome head! For it is thou, not I, that art the purloiner, if question there be of such things. Ere I was I, thou fantastical and incomprehensible spirit, unpurged of thine earthly gracelessness, thou didst tamper with my allotted genius, and leave in its stead some lame changeling likeness of thine own: for which grievous and irremediable wrong I yet must kiss thy kind ghost-hand ("thou smilest, O mine everlasting father!"), even as if I forgave thee.

Verily, who of the brotherhood can say, word for word with a noble forerunner, that his volume, "not picked from the leaves of any author, was bred amongst the weeds and tares of his own brain"? For the seeds of those very weeds and tares, for aught he knows, were blown from an adjacent garden, over the hedge-rows and the wall. The suspicion is maddening. A writer meant to be his own genus and species can be easily spoiled by bookishness; and his lute tinkles but faintly amid the "din and smithery" of school-learning with which he surrounds himself. Nothing happier could befall him than that a friend should fire his study-shelves behind him, and set him gaspingly adrift on his own brain. Such isolation is a medal of benefit, face and reverse. If your scribe retire from reading and from critics altogether, and be not distilled forthwith into pure spontaneity and originality, he at least takes away from himself the mournful chance of contemplating his likeness to other men. He shuts the door on the tragic evidence that his much-respected mind is but a chipping of some fine old boulder which thundered through the world ages back. He is living a life which an obliging gentleman of the Renaissance had already comprised and developed; but in waiving the scholar's instinct he keeps his innocent content.

Knowledge is but sorrow's spy:
'Tis better not to know!

The sober truth is that, in a super-Solomonic sense, it is vain to sigh for anything new under the sun. And as for literature, the longer time lasts, the more appalling must be the prospect for fresh material. The day will loom up, not too distant, either, when authors Mongolian, Caucasian, and Ethiopian will be seized with kleptomania; when every obsolete poet's pot of obsolete gold will be burrowed for and rent apart by the hard-driven communists; when the possessive pronouns of art will get knocked smartly on the head, when ideas will disperse hourly under the auctioneer's hammer, and the individual pretensions alike of Dante and of Mr. Tupper will be ground to powder in some huge scrimmage of a comedy.

The air is laden with vibrations of bygone voices: the voice of Firdusi, maybe, the voice of Theocritus, or that of both strangely blended, jarred and re-pitched with distance, but unmistakable; or the rude massive voices of antiquity, re-born so fully and so lately that we swear them young as youth, and sacred only to the morrow. "In the parliament of the present, every man represents a constituency of the past." We move in the craggy country, whose echoes are never stilled. A horn blows on the hill, clear, thrilling, musical; and we call to the coming huntsman. But, lo! it is only the wafted sound of Roland's horn, broken at Roncesvalles. In these current years of grace, a poet's best must be, in Shelley's thoughtful phrase, "old songs with new gladness." We have to remember sighingly that our standards of originality are relative; and the highest praise must be, not that our author is a law unto himself, but that his mannerism is suggestive of nothing which we can call to mind. But, meanwhile, no one critic carries the memory of all literature in his head, and no writer had ever the benefit of a coroner's inquest of all critics. A book plays a lad's part, and rides the lists unchallenged for generations, without a test or an exposure, or a true spying-out of its withered anatomy. It is a melancholy certainty that as our choicest witticisms were "old Indian before they were new Greek," so all fine sayings of verse and oratory are fossiliferous,—if we but knew it! The blessing of popularity is very shy of rare workmanship, and leaves such as Clough or Hawthorne in the lurch; but antiquities neatly sugar-coated satisfy the real hunger for novelties, and get close to the head of that list which no gentleman's library should be without. There is small doubt that Adam, in his mellow long bachelorhood, had thought over every theory now considered sacred to Kant, or to the whole German bigwiggery; or that some mild genius, when Kant and Adam are both *passés*, will have the ancient threadbare visions revealed to him, and will shriek the tidings abroad to the wide-mouthed attentive continent. Indeed, we have all fallen into a vicious habit of naming such and such a book as the product of such and such men and women, whereas we know nothing about it beyond our own expedencies of speech, as children talk of "my school" and "your street," and are understood among themselves the world over. Our affectionate applause, our commendation and encouragement for the youngest head uprising, is but a tearful make-believe for his sake and our own. The angel of literature, too, seeing the hoary moss on our novelties, cherishes the promise of neophytes. Our empire over words is like a banner worn to a threadbare fold; but there is great diversity of character in the handling of it, and its storied beauty, borne through dingy cities, is, after all, that which keeps a race alive.

The grim theory that there is no originality somehow fails to work out its sequence, that there is no plagiarism; but tends sooner to prove that the latter agreeable alternative is closer and readier than our philosophy dreams of, being merely a game of perpetual grab at the floating capital of literature. Or let us say that all art, like the ocean, is forever and forever withdrawing and restoring. The third wave of the flood-tide may come back to our feet, precisely itself, as the thousandth-

and-tenth, unless it be sucked under, rather, of a beautiful blowy morning, to reappear on an antipodal coast, in countless absurd partial sprays and ripples; and to be as good as new (yet worthy of adoring wonder, being very antique) unto the folk of the far isle. Admitting that matter itself is acquired, style, which is the manner of putting the matter, is proverbially so. One may "give days and nights to the study of Addison," and make a phrase as one makes a canoe or a spade. But again, the germs of noble diction grow otherwise in Arcadia. For there must be a style of no study, likewise acquired, but acquired as if by sheer healthful exposure to wind and weather; which is a jolly and labor-saving sort of apprenticeship, and greatly to be preferred, if it were of mortal choosing. Thrice lucky scribes! We may imagine such coeval with ourselves, repaying the gods for this unearned gift given, by humble exercise of it, and by fastidious integrity. No boastfulness, but a sad chivalry of habit, holds them off from certain library territories, from associations, predilections, fair enough to the public sense of right. They are no more covetous than they should be. As for true-blue plagiarizing, gentlemen of the jury, how shall they have the nerve for it? They stand, like pinafores nurslings at the windows, gaping curiously, and with eccentric homage, at the engaging wickednesses of street-urchins. The subject of literary piracy has the attraction of repulsion for them. Admirable deviltry! they cry. They watch the squadron of thieving pens abroad, now as in every age of this perspicuous planet; they eye them from secure heights with timorous, humorous acquiescence; but to them the crusade appeals not. Let us write them and believe them poor, by your leave, but proud; and in so far as will controls these things, their own doggerel rather than Cicero's translation.

Louise Imogen Guiney.

LIMITATION.

AS when the imperial bird wide-circling soars
 From his lone eyry, towered above the seas
 That wash the wild and rugged Hebrides,
 A force which he unconsciously adores
 Bounds the majestic flight that heaven explores,
 And droops his haughty wing,—as when the breeze
 Tempts to o'erleap their changeless boundaries
 The waves that tumble, foaming, to those shores,—
 So thou, my soul! impatient of restriction,
 With deathless hopes and longings all aglow,
 Aspirest still, and still the stern prediction
 Stays thee, as them, "No further shalt thou go!"
 But, ah! the eagle feels not thine affliction,
 Nor can the broken waves thy disappointment know.

Florence Earle Coates.

THE YELLOW SHADOW.

I.

NOT many years ago I was an undergraduate at Cambridge, England. The name of my college I suppress, for obvious reasons. Those who knew me then, and saw something of a most curious episode of my life, will remember me, and find a clue in this narrative to what puzzled them once; those who did not know me would learn nothing from merely personal details.

St. Anthony's will do very well for the name of my college, and Harold Beaumont for my own name; or, in the combined and succinct form in which I was accustomed to state them to proctors or other inquirers, "Beaumont of Ant's." I spring from an old and highly-respected county family, whose founder came over with the Conqueror, if not before. Ralph de Beaumont (which was not my ancestor's real name, of course) did not get a title, nor did any of his descendants; and since the family gave up robbing and took to farming they have not thriven, on the whole. As the younger son, in a time of agricultural depression, I could only reckon on a good—that is to say, a university—education; and had I not been lucky in securing a lucrative scholarship, I might have been sent out to Australia or Canada,—countries which many English families seem to regard merely as convenient places for shooting their waste products. My habits were studious and solitary: without being forced to pinch, I had to be economical. For the rest (not to be tedious), I will say that I was, and am still, tall, considered myself not bad-looking, and was admitted by all my friends to have a fine taste in neckties.

One evening in February, in the Lent term of my second year, a friend living in the avenue asked me to come in for some whist. We played till about eleven o'clock, and then I left the party, to return to my college. The avenue is sufficiently dark at all times, and it was peculiarly ghostly then from the contrast which the white moonlight made with the deep shadows of the houses and the tree-trunks. I cannot say that I felt any fear while in that mysterious darkness, but I was not sorry to quit it and emerge on the raised foot-path of the Trumpington Road. The night was still and frosty, and the moonlight clearer and brighter than I ever remember having seen it. There were none of the magical bluish misty lights, the shifting and melting shadows born of vapor or wind; every shade was clear-cut and black on the white road, as if inlaid in ebony on ivory. I noticed the distinctness of the form that followed my own,—a silhouette from which any one who knew my face could have identified me, so plain was the profile when I turned my head sideways a little and took off the obscuring college cap.

After a while I approached the gas-lamps, which had been very needlessly lighted. So strong was the moonlight that only when I came close under a lamp-post was the shadow cast by the gas at all

comparable in depth to the other. I noticed, when I stood near one of the lights, how the different tints of the rays caused a contrast in the shadows. Those thrown by the moon looked brown; those cast by the lamp were gray and even bluish. Of course I understood the reason of this, for even if I had not studied optics I could hardly have failed to profit by the instruction so liberally dispensed by a well-known firm of soap-advertisers. The yellow rays in the gaslight would naturally make the shadow have a bluish tint by contrast; in the same way the bluish white of the moonbeams caused the brown shadows, and a strong blue light would of course have resulted in a yellow shadow.

While this reflection was passing through my mind, I happened to look down again at my shadow, or rather at my shadows. As I did so, a sudden tremor passed through all my limbs. I reeled against the railing and clutched it convulsively, for there, stretching from my feet, distinct on my path, was a *yellow shadow*. So plain was its tint and outline that it might have been a patch of fresh gravel on the path. I tried to disbelieve this strange appearance,—to treat it as a mere derangement of the sight; but it would not follow my eyes when I turned them away. I tried hard to think that this was only a shadow cast by the moonlight; but the brown shade thrown by the moon was quite plain, lying at right angles to this. Besides, when I first saw the shadow it had been between me and the railing; when I staggered against the rail it had wheeled round me quickly, as a passer-by might have done to avoid being pressed against the iron or pushed into the conduit that runs by the path. Now the Yellow Shadow was quite motionless on the white walk, and remained so.

The cold of the iron rail against my hand roused me from my stupor of bewilderment. I set myself resolutely to examine this shadow that had attached itself to me. Whether a spectral visitor, or an optical illusion, or a mere hallucination due to overwork or biliousness, it need inspire no dread. If I could not account for it, I could at least determine what it looked like. But at the first steady look I cast on the yellow patch of shade I started again: *it was not my shadow at all*. About the feet it was indistinct, and melted into my own shadows, especially that cast by the moonlight; but the rest of the outline, though clearly that of a human form, was as clearly not mine. I could distinguish a female head, like a silhouette, upon the path. I could see the delicate profile, the profusion of hair loosely knotted together behind the head. The shadow of a piece of lace stood out upon the curve of the breast, and I could have sworn that I saw it stirring. Nearer my feet came the wider shadow of an ample skirt. The form was life-size, and in proper proportion. If any one will take a figure-subject drawn on white paper, cut out the drawing with scissors, and spread the rest of the sheet on a piece of common dull-yellow paste-board, he will have an exact reproduction, in miniature, of what I saw.

After a few minutes spent in gazing at this strange form, I summoned up courage to walk on a few steps. The Yellow Shadow glided on unchanged beside me. As an experiment (now that my curiosity was overpowering my dread), I obliques towards the edge of the road.

As I did so, the figure swung round me till it came between me and the water. I fancied, however, that I could detect a motion of the shoulders and a toss of the head, as if to display a petulant disapproval of my rudeness. The Shadow, then, had a will and even a temper of her own, for I felt compelled to consider the form as that of a woman. Again I strove to shake off what I was desperately resolved to consider an illusion. I pinched myself hard, but with no result except a bruise. Then I turned and deliberately stared at the figure outlined on the moonlit path. Oh, horror! as I looked, the sharply-marked profile became blunted and finally effaced, and on each side of the head appeared the curve of the flowing tresses. I knew that the Shadow had turned her face towards me; I felt that the gaze of unseen eyes was upon me. With one wild shriek I dashed off down the road, and, while running at the top of my speed, looked round at my inexorable attendant, still sliding after me in the moonlight, inseparable. Not unnaturally, I ran violently into the first person I happened to meet, who was a big policeman. We rolled over together in utter confusion; then the practised constable extricated himself and rose, hauling me up by the collar. It did not occur to me, however, to regard him otherwise than as a friend who might release me from my unwelcome follower. Before he could bring his vast mind to bear on the situation, I gasped out, "Oh, take her away! take her away!"

"Take *who* away?" inquired he, sternly. "What have you been a-doing of, then?"

"It's a woman, and I can't get rid of her!" I stammered. "She's following me!"

"That's *rather* sing'lar, young man," remarked the policeman. "Generally it's *rather* the other way with you 'varsity gents. And I don't see no woman, neither. You've been a-taking of something, that's where it is."

"No, there! look there! she's a shadow,—a yellow shadow!"

The form of my attendant was plainly visible on the pavement when I began speaking; but as I pointed to it the Shadow swung quickly round till it coincided in direction with my own shadow as thrown by the moon. Thus, though I, with my naturally keen perception of color sharpened by dread, could see her outline dimly showing on the brown, it was completely hidden from the dull eyes of an incredulous constable. He glanced over the path where I pointed, but carelessly, rather to humor my delusion than to see for himself. If the Shadow had been perfectly plain he would not have condescended to notice her.

"Now, look here, sir," he said, in a tone of contemptuous pity, as he picked up and restored to me my college cap, "if you take my advice, you'll go to your rooms very quiet, and get to bed, and if you see any yellow shadows to-morrow, *then* you can come to me again. And if I were you, I wouldn't go rushing round at that pace, a-calling out that you're being followed. Begging your pardon, sir, you don't look as if you could afford to meet old six-and-eightpenny * *too* often."

* The proctors are accustomed to levy fines of this amount and upwards.

Though this allusion to the proctors, and indeed the whole tone of the intelligent officer's remarks, struck me as disrespectful, I could not help feeling that he displayed a certain amount of common sense. I thanked him, and bestowed a shilling on him, which he took with an air of severe virtue, and as I moved off I could hear him soliloquizing,—

"Well, I've known 'em see black dogs and snakes often, and blue devils sometimes; but that's the first as had a yellow shadow that I ever see. P'r'aps it was orange bitters as *he* sewed himself up with, or some stuff as give him the yellow jarnders!"

I confess that these imputations on my character annoyed me, and had I been athletic I could gladly have bonneted and beaten the policeman, and even carried off his helmet as a trophy, as I had heard of some rowdy men doing; but considerations of prudence restrained me, and I walked on rapidly towards my college. The Shadow was still mingled with my own, and sometimes I doubted whether there was anything but my own shadow there, especially when a browner paving-stone broke the whiteness of the path. I had almost brought myself to disbelieve in the existence of my attendant, when the three-quarters chimed from the church-tower near me. I looked at my watch instinctively, to see what time remained, and whether it was indeed a quarter to twelve; and when I dropped my glance to the pavement again, there was the hateful Yellow Shadow, at right angles to mine, distinct in profile, and with the lips curved as if in an ironical smile.

I do not know exactly how I reached the college and rang the bell, nor how, when let in, I entered my rooms. I did get there, however, and found the fire still alight. I heaped on coals, and soon a bright flame sprang up, and sent my shadow dancing over the walls and ceiling in every variety of gigantic distortion. But, as I turned, among these fantastic visions, clear and distinct on the wall I saw the Yellow Shadow. With the calmness of despair I lit my lamp, glancing up from time to time at the form of my tormentor. When I had turned up the flame as high as I could without smoking the glass, I sat down in a deep arm-chair and gazed at the Shadow. She remained perfectly still, as if used to being stared at. As far as I could judge from her profile, she was young and pretty,—that is, the form that would have corresponded to hers would have been young and pretty. Her hair was luxuriant and wavy, knotted loosely behind, and flowing over her shoulders; she had an exquisite little nose, slightly "tip-tilted" (sweet epithet, by which the Laureate has earned the love of all turn-up-nosed women forever), full, pouting lips, and a chin with much obstinacy in its outline. As far as the shadow served me, I conjectured that the substance was dressed in some rich, stiff gown, decidedly low in the neck, and edged with lace. Her arms were hanging at her side, I suppose, for I could see nothing of them. A slight protuberance on either side of the slender throat seemed to indicate a necklace. As I looked still, the lips parted, as if in a sigh, and one bare arm (at least I saw no sleeve), on whose exquisite curves I noticed the projection of two bracelets, was slowly raised to the head. The hand held what looked like a feather-fan; and the Shadow began moving the image of this fan to and fro, as if she found my room close.

Even in the misery that this persecution caused me (for I felt almost convinced that the apparition was an indication of insanity), I was amused to see the calm way in which the Yellow Shadow made herself at home on my wall; and, with the coarse jocularly that men will sometimes affect in hopeless wretchedness, I exclaimed, aloud,—

"Well, old girl, you seem pretty much at home in these diggings."

The Shadow tossed her head slightly, as if she did not understand my speech and did not want to understand it.

"Do you mean to stay here, madam?" I went on, recklessly.

She nodded slowly and emphatically.

"In that case," I remarked, ironically, "perhaps I can make you up a bed on the wall, or get you the shadow of some supper."

I saw that obscurity of her profile which led me to infer that she was turning her face to me or away from me, as I never could be quite sure which. Then she shook her head, but in a slow and serious way that made me sure she had not appreciated the sarcasm of my speech. I conceived a low opinion of her intelligence, which I never afterwards saw reason to alter. Certainly she had no sense of humor,—not a shadow of it, in fact.

"Then, madam," I resumed, in a tone of polished satire, "if you do not want anything to eat or to drink or to sleep upon, perhaps you will be so good as to tell me what you *do* want."

She was quite still, and looked blank, but then she *always* looked blank.

"May I inquire," I went on, with more confidence, "whether you *can* talk?"

She shook her head, very slowly and sadly, I thought. Evidently she felt the deprivation very keenly, though I was rather glad than otherwise. Supposing that my Yellow Shadow was not subjective, but objective (to speak philosophically), it was a relief to know that she could not compromise me by her voice. A vocal shadow, over whom one had no control, would be as bad as a baby and considerably worse than a cat. However, I wished to establish some means of communication with my visitor. She could evidently hear, though she could not speak, and she could also see; but how was she to tell me anything but "yes" or "no"?

"Do you know the deaf and dumb alphabet?" I asked; but she shook her head, and I remembered that I did not know it either. Did she know how to write? She nodded several times. Could she make a mark on anything? Alas, no! and, besides, I did not want to have my walls scrawled over, just after paying four pounds eighteen shillings and ninepence for the paint.

I meditated deeply for some time, then I started up so suddenly as to make the Shadow start. "I've hit it!" I cried. "You write on the wall with your finger, and I shall see each letter as you form it,—that is, if it is not too much trouble," I added, politely. She clapped her hands with delight on the wall. Then she raised her arm, and I could see her writing with her forefinger. I read each letter as she formed it, and *saw* each in imagination for a moment after it was written. She wrote an execrable hand, but I could make out the words "Oh, that

will be brave!" I may here remark that the Yellow Shadow's spelling was very bad, or (as spelling reformers might think) very good, being generally phonetic.

"You will not mind my having coffee?" I asked. She shook her head, and I proceeded to brew some. When I looked up from my coffee-pot, I could see that she was wishing to attract my notice.

"I beg your pardon, madam," I said; "I am all attention now," and she wrote, "Do the men make coffee for themselves now?" I regret that I did not preserve her spelling of "coffee;" it was a curiosity.

"Everybody here drinks coffee for breakfast, and makes it himself, madam," I said, politely.

"And how are the coffee-houses doing?" she asked. "Will the Lord Chancellor shut them up, as he threatened?"

The question, I own, fairly puzzled me. As far as I recollected, members of the Government had lately opened coffee-palaces; and as for the Lord Chancellor! What could she mean? I told her, as politely as I could, that her words conveyed no meaning to me. She repeated her question, adding that she had heard that the measure was planned in consequence of slanderous speeches about the king.

A gleam of light broke in on me. I hastily rose and took down a volume of Hallam, and turned to the index. As I thought, the chancellor in question was Lord Clarendon, and the king, Charles II. I tried to explain to my visitor that the king and his minister had both been dead a considerable time; indeed, I was proceeding in a concise manner to give an account of what had happened in the interval, when the Shadow turned her back on me—at least I am nearly sure it was her back—and put both hands to her ears. Then, when I had stopped talking, she turned, and traced on the wall a hasty scrawl from which I gathered that she did not want what she called "sirmans." Obviously, the Yellow Shadow was not amenable to education. She had no depth of character.

It might be possible, however, I thought, to gain some useful information from her. I might utilize her as a sort of Pepys's Diary, to draw from at will. Her very frivolity would make her testimony more trustworthy: she *could* not invent anything. So I asked her politely (I am always polite) what her name was, and where she had lived. She wrote down "Barbara Beaumont." The date of her death she had forgotten,—or at least her shadow had; but I gathered from her subsequent statements that she died of the plague when only twenty years old, and thus I was able to fix her date approximately. I confess that I was disappointed to hear how early in the reign she had died. I remembered, now, something that an old aunt had once told me about Mistress Barbara, daughter of Roger Beaumont, a stanch Cavalier nearly ruined by the Commonwealth and little bettered by the Restoration. Barbara, my aunt said, was the hope of the family then, and her early death destroyed their prospects entirely. She had been very pretty, to judge from her picture, with which the Shadow agreed. If she had not taken the plague, my aunt used to tell me, I might now be a connection of a ducal family. The thought of what I had lost by

my distant relative's imprudence was indeed bitter; but I recognized, with my accustomed fairness, that it was not her fault.

It was some time before I could determine whether I myself was descended from Roger Beaumont or his brother Ralph; but I decided for Ralph. It was awkward to be haunted by a family Shadow; but, on the whole, it was pleasanter to consider her as a cousin than as an aunt. So I informed her that we were cousins,—how many, or how far removed, I could not venture to estimate. "Then," she instantly wrote down, "you can call me Bab, if we are cosens"—that was her way of spelling it. This fondness for going by a short pet name struck me as curiously like what I had seen and heard of spirits at séances. They generally went by childish nicknames, they seemed painfully frivolous, and wrote and spelt as badly as the mediums themselves. I could not help noting this strong agreement, as proving at once the truth of spiritualism and the genuineness of my own family shadow.

The conversation that ensued between Bab and myself needs no reporting at length. In spite of the coffee, I was sleepy, and said little that was worthy of preservation, and Bab's talk was decidedly vapid. Two centuries make small-talk seem very stale. My most brilliant repartees (when I roused myself) fell flat on her. Once, I remember, she was trying, without much success, to recall a song composed in honor of her pretty nose by a French gentleman at the court. The burden of the strain was some insipid doggerel about "*ce nez mignon*," which she kept on writing when she could not recollect the rest. At the seventh repetition, I suggested, with delicate humor, "Ah, '*Mignon aspirant au ciel*,' I suppose." She did not understand the allusion, of course, and thought I had meant to be rude; and, while striving to appease her, I fell asleep in my arm-chair, somewhere about four in the morning.

II.

At seven o'clock my bedmaker, coming in to light my fire, was so astonished at seeing me slumbering in the chair, that she dropped her dust-pan with a crash that awoke me. I rubbed my eyes, and then looked round anxiously, as I remembered the vision of the last night, or, to speak strictly, of that morning. I could not see the Yellow Shadow anywhere about the room. There were yellowish patches enough on the worn green carpet, alas! but none of them had a human shape. The relief was immense; it was only some wild dream, after all, and my kinswoman Bab's apparition was still—well, wherever it ought to be. I told my bedmaker, cheerfully, that I had been reading late, and had gone to sleep in my chair; and I ordered the unaccustomed extravagance of scalloped oysters for breakfast, as an outlet to my reckless joy. Then I went to my bedroom to get a bath; but as my hand was on the door I heard Mrs. Scroggins calling to me.

"I beg your pardon, sir," she said, "but shall I leave this book on the table or put it away?" I glanced at the book in her hand: it was a volume of Hallam's Constitutional History. The old dread mastered me again for a moment. Was it possible that I had taken out the book in my sleep, as a part of my fevered dream? The leaf

was still turned down at the reference to coffee-houses. I made some answer and fled to my bedroom, where I hastily plunged my head into a basin of icy water.

The morning passed with no return of my trouble, and, as I worked away at a problem paper, I became more and more convinced that Barbara was all a dream. The sleep in which I supposed myself to have seen and talked to the Shadow did not seem to have rested me, for I was dull and heavy and could not work as well as usual; but this I attributed to sleeping in a chair and in a cold room. The dream, I thought, could be utilized as the basis of a contribution for the Mythical Society, of which a branch had recently been founded at Cambridge.

After my usual day's work, I went to bed early, and, being tired, fell asleep at once and did not wake till eight the next morning. I saw nothing of Mistress Barbara, and felt quite sure now that she was but an illusion. So it was with a light heart that I did my papers and took my constitutional "grind;" and without any forebodings, when I found myself without postage-stamps, I sallied forth to get some at about half-past nine in the evening, and returned by a round through the town, as I felt tired of working. At the corner of a street my attention was aroused by a great noise. Certain members of the university, having dined and wine not wisely, but too well, were enlivening their return to their colleges by a song and the blasts of a horn. Suddenly arose a warning cry of "Proctor!" and round a turn in the street came a portly don, with a little head and a big beard, the mystic bands shining at his throat in the moonlight. He was followed by his faithful attendants, the "bull-dogs," in their many-buttoned livery. Then there was a stampede, a chase, a taking of names and colleges; all which I beheld with the calmness of conscious rectitude. I had my cap and gown on, I was strictly sober, I was not driving tandem or four-in-hand, having dealings with money-lenders, or doing anything prohibited by the university statutes. As I was reflecting with pardonable complacency on my blameless character, I happened to look down, and there, at my feet, was the Yellow Shadow, distinct as ever. Her face was in profile, and I could see that she was pouting and angry. She was beckoning with her finger, and when she saw that I was looking she wrote on the moonlit pavement, "Why did you not watch for me last night? I am not used to be slighted so. You must take me to the play now, or I shall never forgive you."

"Really, Bab!" I exclaimed,—or perhaps I used a stronger phrase,—"you are very tiresome. I have no time to go with you now; and, besides, you are much earlier than you were before. Can't you let me alone?" I spoke hastily, and not very politely; but the shock of this renewed persecution, which I could no longer regard as a dream, was enough to make any man lose his temper.

"Your name and college, sir, if you please," said a pompous voice at my elbow, and I saw the proctor. He did not wait for the answer, but stepped to the street-corner near which I was standing and peered round it. "She's hidden away somewhere cleverly!" he muttered; "but I know her."

I could not help laughing, as I began to have an inkling of his

absurd mistake. He turned angrily upon me, and repeated, "Now, sir, your name and college!" I lost my temper at this.

"My name is Beaumont of Ant's, as you know very well, Mr. Smithson," I said; "and may I inquire why you should feel it necessary to ask so needless a question?"

"Why, really!" he puffed; "didn't I see you and hear you talking to a girl just now, and did she not run away as soon as she saw me coming? and you ask me why? Still, you have a good character, I know, and if you can explain it I shall be glad,—if you come to me to-morrow."

While he was speaking, I had reflected, and I felt assured that the only way to save my reputation was to disclose the whole story. Mr. Smithson was a light of the Mythical Society; and if I could once make him believe in the apparition, he would not only excuse, but lionize me. Only I must *show* him the Yellow Shadow to convince him, and Barbara had retired into my own shade as cast by the moonlight, and was not easily to be distinguished. Still, I felt I must try this resource. I could not justify myself next day, for she only appeared at night.

"Sir," I said, "I will tell you all now, if you can wait five minutes. You did not *see* anybody with me just now, did you?"

"Don't try quibbling," he answered, sharply; "it won't go down with me. I saw her shadow round the corner, and I heard you talking to her and calling her Bab, or Baby, or something. Isn't that enough? Why isn't she here now, if it is all right?"

"She is here," I said, "and the shadow you saw is all of her that I have ever seen myself."

"Do you take me for a fool?" he asked, roughly. "You had better wait till to-morrow; you are only making matters worse. Good-night."

"Stop, please!" I entreated, catching him by the sleeve. "Send your bull-dogs to the end of the street, and I will *show* her."

His curiosity triumphed, as I had hoped; and he sent away his satellites, and stood fidgeting from foot to foot. "Now, then, Beaumont," he said, "produce her, quickly; not that I believe for a moment you can, you know."

"Cousin Barbara," I asked, in my sweetest tones, "please come out and be introduced to this gentleman. You will like him very much, I am sure."

She was sulky and would not come out, and I could see that the proctor was growing more impatient and incredulous.

"Barbara," I said, solemnly, "you know that you wanted to go to the play. Well, if you won't come out, I will *never* take you: there!"

Still she remained hidden, and I resolved upon severe and desperate measures.

"Bab," I said, sternly, "if you don't come out this instant, I shall be turned out of my college, and in that case I shall *migrate to Corpus*, and" (I added, with deadly emphasis) "there I *can* and *will* attend six religious meetings *every* night!"

This threat was perhaps a little exaggerated; but she could not know that. It was calculated to appall the most frivolous, and it

frightened her. Slowly and reluctantly she swung round at right angles to my shadow, and lay on the pavement, right under the proctor's nose. He jumped back and got behind a lamp-post, exclaiming, "Bless my soul!" then, recovering himself, said, with a forced laugh, "I beg your pardon, madame: I had to get out of your way rather suddenly. —And do you mean to say, Beaumont, that this shadow follows you every night? You must come to the Mythical next meeting and bring her. I suppose she's quite harmless, and doesn't forebode anything?"

I assured him, as soon as he would wait for an answer, that she was entirely harmless, and only tiresome. As for foreboding anything, she could never pass the elementary examination for the degree of Banshee, I was sure.

"Then, if you don't care to come to the Society yourself," he said, eagerly, "do you suppose she would go with *me*? Signora Bavardi is coming, and we want to have something to show her."

I was about to ask the Shadow, when she scrawled on the pavement a "no," in letters fully two feet high,—that is to say, long.

"She declines," I said: "you see, I think she *can* only go with a relative,—a Beaumont."

"Oh, that's the reason, then," he exclaimed, his face brightening again. "Of course it must be the reason: what else could it be? Now, my dear boy, I must be going on my rounds; come with me and tell me all about how you got this Shadow."

He hooked his arm in mine and dragged me off, regardless of his dignity; but I noticed with pain that whenever he was not looking at Barbara she appeared to be making faces at him,—or at least distorting her profile in a very strange way.

III.

I prefer to pass over rapidly the events of the next few days and nights. The Shadow came to me every evening, about nine, or earlier,—"as soon as she could get away," she said,—but she never would tell me where she came from, or why she only came at night. She would keep me awake to talk to her, night after night,—the most pitiful small-talk I ever knew. Unless I could fall asleep before she came, it was hopeless to get any rest until too weary to keep awake. At first I stayed up from politeness, and a sense that doubtless my poor cousin found her other existence very dull and needed a little relaxation. But even my courtesy was not inexhaustible; and as my work was suffering from the late hours I kept, and from the numerous entertainments to which the Shadow insisted on being taken, I had to try going to bed very early. This, however, did not answer for long; Barbara was at first puzzled by the ruse, but must soon have taken advice on the subject. Who helped her, I cannot of course say, but I felt convinced she could not have devised her measures by herself. I was peacefully sleeping, one night, forgetful of my persecutor, when a furious knocking at my outer door aroused me. It was only ten o'clock, but I had retired early to avoid my visitor. I hurried on a few things and rushed to open my door. There stood Bolton, a usually very quiet undergraduate who kept in the rooms under mine. He seemed greatly excited.

"I say, Beaumont," he exclaimed, "what on earth have you been doing up here to make such a mess on your floor?"

I was bewildered, and asked him what he meant.

"Why," he said, "there's a great yellow stain on the ceiling of my room; and I don't care to have my place spoilt because you take to spilling chemicals."

"What is the stain like?" I asked.

"Oh, a big, dull-yellow patch, like damp, something,—a curious shape, too, just like the shadow of a woman."

I very nearly fainted. This, then, was the diabolical plot to wake me. Bab, apparently, was projected on to my floor, as a shadow, from *below*,—a fact which was not reassuring; and, as my bedroom was just over Bolton's sitting-room, she had stopped on his ceiling, before reaching my carpet, and had thus impelled him to call me up. It was no use trying to avoid the nightly interview any more. I went down with Bolton, despairingly, and of course found, when I reached his room, that the Shadow had disappeared from his ceiling and left it a blank. I could still see her tangled up with my own shadow on the carpet; but he did not think of looking there.

"Well, I never!" said Bolton, in blank amazement. "It's gone now, and I could have sworn I saw it!"

"You must be bilious," I suggested; "that makes you see yellow spots on things."

"Perhaps so," said he, and I could see he regarded my explanation with distrust; "but if I see it again I shall certainly come up to your rooms and stop it *somehow*. Good-night." And he slammed his door viciously.

After this I surrendered at discretion. Bab would not tell me who put her up to arousing Bolton, but she said, with a threatening air, that she would do it again if I tried going to sleep early; and if that did not answer, she would try something else. It was quite enough for me; I yielded to her wishes. I took her to the play whenever there was a performance at Cambridge; I went to dinners given by rather fast men, and had to give dinners in return. I kept away from the concerts, because she did not appreciate Brahms, and there was little else. My work fell off; I became tired and jaded, worn out by want of rest and the labor of talking in answer to the depressing frivolities of the Yellow Shadow. Friends who had freely taken five to two about my chances of the Senior Wranglership now began to hedge. Barbara could not and would not do anything for my comfort; she possessed all the disadvantages, and none of the advantages, of a wife, for me. I began to look forward with anxiety to the approaching meeting of the Mythical Society,—not that I wanted to show off my Shadow, as I had once foolishly thought of doing, but because I felt a hope that among so many learned men, all on intimate terms with ghosts, I should find one at least who could free me from my tormentor. Surely the mighty Signora Bavardi herself could exorcise the Shadow,—spirit her away, transmute her into another shape, reduce her to an astral body, or in some way make her inoffensive.

So it was with reviving confidence that I sought the rooms where

the society was to meet. I was early, and the Yellow Shadow had not yet come to attend me. My friend the proctor had wanted to put a special announcement of this new attraction in the notices sent round, but, knowing Barbara's uncertain temper and habits, I dissuaded him.

"Suppose," I said, "the new attraction did not come off satisfactorily: what should we do?"

"My dear boy," he answered, "our experiments never do come off: so that is nothing."

However, he was overruled.

When I reached the place of meeting it was half full of men, mostly undergraduates, talking in little groups, some believing, some sceptical, some inquiring and impartial. The ubiquitous Mr. Smithson swung in and out of these groups like a humming-top, always returning to the knot of grave professors and clergymen that surrounded Signora Bavardi, who, so far as I could see, was engaged in smoking cigarettes and looking oracular.

I need not describe the meeting, except as regards my own share in it. The Sibyl of the evening delivered a sort of lecture expounding occult doctrines, which to me, at least, were rather more occult after her explanation than before it. I cannot say, however, that I listened with any great care. I was waiting anxiously for Barbara, who was unusually late. The speech of Signora Bavardi was over, and the professors were asking her questions and urging her to perform some of the wonders of which she had boasted. She did not seem to take very kindly to these proposals, but at last arranged (as far as I could hear) to send a spirit message to an adept in Calcutta, which was to be answered by telegraph from that city, the cost of the telegram to be paid by the society. Then began a very lively discussion about the terms of the message, and while this was at its height I suddenly felt the little nervous thrill that proclaimed Bab's presence. I looked down and saw her, though mingled with my own shadow so as not to be easily detected. She only put out one hand on a clear space of floor where the lamplight fell, and wrote, "Why have you come here? Is it a Conventickle [*sic*] of Fanaticks?"

"No, Bab," I whispered, the general hum of conversation covering my voice; "these gentlemen have come here on purpose to see you and talk to you, if you will only come out on the wall and show yourself. You are looking so pretty to-night." I had found that flattery, it mattered not how gross, was the only method of managing the Yellow Shadow. She wavered perceptibly.

"What shall I have to do?" she asked.

"Only come out on the wall," I repeated, "and talk to the professors here and that lady."

"I had rather talk with the young men," she wrote, sulkily.

"Well, you shall, afterwards," I murmured, though I was pretty sure that the committee would engross the Shadow as much as possible.

So Barbara came out, slowly and shrinkingly. I was seated close by the wall of the room, where the light of a hanging oil-lamp was shed on a space clear of ornaments or furniture; and thus the Shadow had a field to display her elegant outline. Much as I longed to get

rid of her, I could not help feeling proud of her appearance. As she became more distinct, a man sitting near me happened to look that way and noticed her. He called the attention of his neighbors, till in a few seconds half the audience were turning to stare at the apparition. Now was the time for me to seek the help of the prophetess. I rose, and the Shadow rose also on the wall.

"Signora Bavardi, and gentlemen of the committee," I said, in a loud voice that stopped the wrangle over the wording of the "telepathic" message, "would you kindly look this way? This society, I believe, examines into all cases of ghostly appearances, but thus far, I think, it has only got within two generations of reliable ghosts. Here is a Shadow, gentlemen, which—I beg her pardon, *who*—will be glad to converse with any one. Allow me to introduce her to you. Signora Bavardi, Mistress Barbara Beaumont, my cousin, of the time of Charles II."

The Sibyl bowed, and Bab gave a frigid little nod. Signora Bavardi turned to me, asking me in French, with a rather frightened air, what she had better say. Meanwhile the Shadow, unabashed, had begun to write on the wall with her finger. I was not looking myself, but I heard an explosion of laughter from some of the undergraduates. I was told afterwards that Barbara was tenderly inquiring about Signor Bavardi.

I was rather disheartened at the occult lady's apprehensive look. All Italians, however "advanced" in thought, have a reserve of superstition somewhere in their hearts. I was afraid that if I spoke French Barbara would understand me, so I merely wrote on a card in pencil, "Say anything, only please try to get rid of her. She pesters me." It was a hasty and ill-judged act. As Signora Bavardi took the card from me, she dropped it on the floor. Mr. Smithson was standing by, explaining the Shadow to his friends, and he at once stooped and officiously picked up my card. "Shall I read it, signora?" he asked: "I think I am more used to my young friend's handwriting than you."

"Very well," said the Occultist, and, in spite of my frenzied appeals to him, Mr. Smithson read out the fatal words. The mischief was done. The Yellow Shadow went into the most fearful passion I have ever seen, or at least the most *conspicuously* fearful passion; for with her every feeling came to the surface; there was nothing else for it to come to. She abused and threatened me in a way that made my hair stand on end; and the deliberation with which she was forced to express herself on the wall enabled her to choose her epithets with some felicity. Then, as I did not answer, but sat bowed down with shame and fear, no longer even daring to look at the wall, but hearing the laughter that followed each sentence as she wrote it, she turned her wrath on Signora Bavardi. Did I think, she asked, that I could get rid of her by the help of "an old frump that smoakes tobacco?" Those were her very words, and of course her spelling made the speech all the more piquant.

This was too much, not unnaturally, for the prophetess. To sit silent under abuse from a shadow is more than can be expected of any woman. The scolding-match that followed was indescribable. I would

not reproduce it, even if I could, for the court language of the Restoration was not by any means remarkable for refinement, and even Signora Bavardi showed an extensive acquaintance with idiomatic English and still more idiomatic French. The contest had this unique advantage, that although, of course, both ladies were talking all the time, one spoke while the other wrote, so that the audience could follow both at the same moment. Their bursts of laughter formed one continuous roar.

In the thick of the conflict, a telegraph-boy, probably tired of knocking unheard, opened the door. He must have thought he had come to a lunatic-asylum; but he did his duty unmoved, and his shrill, strident voice rang through the tumult like a bugle-call, as he asked for the secretary. Signora Bavardi turned pale and tried to reach the boy. "It is a mistake,—a private telegram for me!" she said; but already the secretary had torn open the envelope, and read the message aloud in the sudden stillness. Barbara was still wildly gesticulating, but no one noticed her now.

"From Kootan Koomaguen, Calcutta, to the Mythical Society, Cambridge," read the secretary. "'Your message received. Truth conquers space'—"

He was about to read further, when a clamor arose among the committee.

"Why, we never sent that spirit message off at all!" cried one. "We hadn't even settled the wording," bellowed another. "It's a fraud!" "It's a sham!" roared several.

Signora Bavardi turned at bay, and raised her hand. "Only hear me!" she shrieked, "and I will explain it all." The committee was silent, and all eyes were fixed on her. I must say I admired her at that moment.

"You know," she said, "that Calcutta is many thousand miles to the east of us, and of course if a telegram is sent from there we must get it long before the hour when it leaves." The audience murmured assent.

"But then," she went on, boldly, "of course the spirit message would be sent and received at the same moment, and answered immediately, so that we should get the answer before we sent——"

Thus far she had been heard; but the instant that the drift of her argument was apparent, a howling, roaring tornado of laughter swept through the room. Every lamp, every candle, was extinguished in a moment. I wonder the very windows were not shattered. Then all was chaos. How I reached my rooms, what became of Signora Bavardi, how any one escaped alive, I never knew, nor could any one afterwards say precisely what had happened.

IV.

My life with Barbara before the Mythical meeting (whose record is not to be found in the Society's archives) was bad enough; but it was Paradise to what followed. It was not merely that she called me all manner of names whenever I looked at her, but the sense that I was pursued by the enmity of a reckless woman, backed up, I felt sure, by

the malignity of some one more intelligent than herself, was gradually driving me mad. I could not work, or row, or even take walks, but spent my days in dozing over the fire in a miserable state of nervous depression, which changed to a deeper gloom as the night drew on and brought my torment nearer.

Had the persecution gone on, I must have been utterly wrecked; but my deliverance was near, and, singularly enough, it was suggested to me by Barbara herself. One night I had been sitting silent and spiritless, watching her calling me names on the wall. At last, provoked by my silence, she wrote, "Why are you moping there? Lord! if I had a real man to talk to!"

"Oh, Bab!" I exclaimed, as a gleam of hope shot across my mind, "would you like to go with some one else?"

She shrugged her shoulders contemptuously.

"Would I not?" she said. "But you are the only Beaumont I can go to, a murrain on you."

I may say that my elder brother was married, and, from what I know of my sister-in-law, I do not wonder that Barbara was afraid of attaching herself to him in preference to me.

"But, Barbara," I suggested, humbly, "I have a cousin up here now,—George Beaumont, who is a distant relation of yours, too; and he is such an agreeable fellow. I am sure you would like to go with him."

Bab was very suspicious of this plan, and I hardly wondered at her distrust, after my attempts to get rid of her. However, at last I induced her to give my cousin George a trial, and, if he suited her, she would try to change to him; "for anything," she wrote, "would be better than *you*."

I spent several hours of that evening in observing the exact shade of yellow that Barbara appeared to be on a white ground, and succeeded in imitating it very nearly. Next day I went and induced a lamp-maker to send me in on trial an extremely powerful lamp, for I did not want to be at too much expense even in getting rid of the Shadow. Then I managed, with great difficulty, to obtain an assortment of blue-glass globes of various shades, under the plea that they were necessary for my eyes; and I persevered with these until by dexterous adjustment I had succeeded in throwing a shadow that looked (by contrast) of the same tint and depth as the Yellow Shadow herself. My aim was to make my shadow and my cousin George's exactly like Barbara, and thus enable her to change from one to the other. After we had thus been reduced to a common denominator, so to speak, addition and subtraction could take place. Last I asked George to come in and see me after hall,* and got in some mulled claret and cigarettes for him.

My cousin George was, on the whole, a decent sort of young fellow, but he was possessed with a desire for being thought a fast and even a rowdy man. Thus, while a subject of pious horror among the saints of his college, he was a continual source of ribald mirth to the real

* That is, after dinner in the college hall.

reprobates. He never got drunk but once, and that I ascribe solely to his extreme weakness of head. He published a thin pamphlet of verses, which, according to his account of them, were to prove simply Satanic; and when they appeared (under another name) they were solely remarkable for their pitiful and abject futility. But Bab, I knew, could only take a superficial view of things, and would accept George on his own valuation.

Everything turned out well, and just as I had planned. George was soon excited by the claret, and talked bigger than I had ever heard even *him* talk. I blushed for our family when I heard the fellow's monstrous lies. None of the gallants of the Merry Monarch's court could ever have rivalled in fact the imaginary delinquencies of this poor, limp little undergraduate. He had drunk of every vintage, gambled at every game, betted on every race. All women were in love with him, even the daughters of masters of colleges had begun to ogle him, and Girton and Newnham languished for him. He even detailed a duel fought at Boulogne, in which he had shot a fire-eating count through the body. I felt sure he had never got nearer to France than Margate, or perhaps Broadstairs; and as for shooting—why, an elephant would have been safe from him at ten paces.

But Barbara took it all in, I knew. She remained demurely hidden in my own shadow; but sometimes she would start out in eagerness as George told of some especially brilliant adventure, and then subside as I looked at her warningly. I could see her pretty well, for I had left the new lamp with a white globe.

At last the hand of my clock marked twenty minutes to ten, and my cousin—George, I mean—rose, and said he must be going. The hour had come at length. Feverish with anxiety, I looked inquiringly at Barbara. She nodded twice, distinctly.

"I say, George," I remarked, in a tone that *would* not sound careless, "have you seen these new blue shades for lamps? My doctor says they are very good for the eyes."

I put on my selected globe as I spoke. An intense blue light succeeded to the white glare, and I saw with a thrill of delight that my shadow and George's and all the shadows in the room were indistinguishable from Barbara. The lamp had no effect on her shade of yellow, for wherever the light was that projected her on my floor, it was certainly not above.

George came close to the lamp to see the make of it, which I praised as something extraordinary. I was just behind him, leaning over him, and almost treading on his heels in my anxiety to be near enough. Then, on some pretext, I moved quickly round to the other side of the table, and took off the blue globe. A pang of disappointment shot through me as I noticed that Bab was still attached to me, much to her own disgust, no doubt. All was in vain, then. My persecutor could not leave me even if she wanted.

As my cousin George again turned to go, a sudden thought struck me. I would try every measure before I would despair. I looked down at his feet, and in a second had formed my plan.

"George," I said, flippantly, "where on earth *do* you buy your

shoes? I think I shall get a pair from that shop for foot-ball matches. I never saw such enormous clumpers."

This was extremely rude on my part, and I knew it; but desperate men do not stop to regard courtesy. Beside, his shoes *were* clumsy, and a very seedy pair too. George was richer than I, but, in spite of his boasted extravagance, he was not fond of spending money when he could help it. Yet he was proud of his small feet,—a peculiarity of the Beaumonts.

"They're no bigger than your own!" he replied, curtly, and with some excusable temper.

"Come, come, George," I said, in a bantering tone, "you won't get me to believe *that*!"

"What will you bet?" asked he.

"Well, you know I never bet," I answered; "but if you can put my shoes on now and get back to your rooms in them you can keep them,—and your own too, for the matter of that." As I spoke, I replaced the blue globe over the lamp.

I saw George's eyes light up with pleasant anticipation. I went up close to him, and stood with a hand on his shoulder to keep my balance while I kicked off my shoes. Then I sprang quickly back, and threw myself on the sofa, with my feet off the ground, while he proceeded to take off his own foot-gear and put on mine. They were new, and pinched him, I felt sure; but he walked resolutely to the door. As he did so, I started up and tore off the blue globe. Oh, joy! as he moved, I could distinctly see the Yellow Shadow following him, and wheeling into his own, when he turned, so as to escape observation.

He said good-night, and went out, stepping rather gingerly, I thought. After shutting the inner door, he was some time fumbling with the outer, and Barbara was still in my room, as far as her knees,—the rest was on the other side of the threshold. She wrote "*Adew*," and courtesied in a mocking way. Then, as he stumbled off, she slid away under the door. Her skirt disappeared, then her waist, then her shoulders, and the pretty head; and lastly went one hand,—whether right or left I could not tell,—which waved a farewell as the tips of the fingers passed out of sight. It was the last I ever saw of Bab.

When I had heard the sound of George's steps die away down the stairs, I sprang up and danced a wild fling in my stockings, at the risk of bringing Bolton up again. Then I finished the claret at one draught, made and drank six cups of tea, read thirty pages of *Spherical Harmonics*, and went to bed in the most blissfully happy state I have ever known.

My tale is told. It only remains to say what has become of the actors in this strange drama. For myself, I have never been troubled since then with shadows,—yellow or otherwise. I regained all my power of work, and was Senior Wrangler in due course. I was made a Fellow, and hope to be some day bursar of St. Anthony's. As for Barbara,—alas, poor Shadow! I am sorry for her fate, though she *did* nearly ruin my prospects. It was some days before George discovered her attendance on him at night; for, in spite of his bragging, he kept very early hours. When he did find out her presence, he was smitten

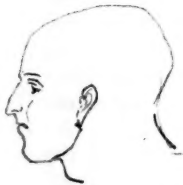
with abject terror, and thought that this visitation was a judgment on his wickedness. He certainly deserved some punishment for being such a liar; but I never heard of his doing anything else that was wrong. As for crimes, he was absolutely incapable of them.

He fled for help to his college dean; and when he could not obtain relief from that bewildered official, who had only taken orders so as to be made dean, he became desperate, and joined the local corps of the Abduction Army. After attending two meetings, he found relief, and was never after troubled by his distant aunt or cousin, the Yellow Shadow. I do not wonder at this; for the ladies of Charles II.'s court, whatever frailties they might have, were always sound Churchwomen,—except when they turned Roman Catholic. Bab never came back to me when she deserted George: perhaps she would not, or more probably she could not. It was her only chance, I fear; and I am sorry she had so dull a holiday. When my cousin "Captain" George was freed from his spectral follower, and had ceased to apprehend any fresh visit from her, he wanted to leave his "company;" but the army had got him, and kept him, and he had not the strength of mind to quit it. To this day I occasionally see him advertised on hoardings as "Cambridge George, the Happy Undergraduate;" and from the reports of his addresses in the *War-Whoop* I should say that he must be almost as great a liar now as when I knew him. Of course, as a Beaumont, I cannot know him now.

Henry Doone.

PRINCESS BADOURA.

NIGHT is regent of the sky;
 All is still in Ispahan.
 On the veined pomegranate-leaves
 That the fragrant breezes fan
 Floods of silver moonlight lie;
 Plaintively the bulbul grieves,
 And the tinkling fountains flow
 In the garden-close below;
 She, above on her divan
 By the casement's open bars,
 Gazes out upon the stars,
 Happy Princess Badoura.



To the slave girl standing near
 Ever and anon she speaks,
 Looking still into the night;
 Persian roses dye her cheeks,
 And against her olive ear
 Shines a pure pearl, snowy white.

Round her, like a filmy veil,
Falls her burnoose, azure pale;
And a gleaming golden spear,
Like a ray of sunlight fair,
Shimmers in her raven hair,
Lovely Princess Badoura.

At her feet there falls a rose;
'Tis the longed-for trysting-hour!
Stooping with an eager air
Tenderly she clasps the flower,
Kisses it the while she goes
Swiftly down the winding stair;
There her exiled lover waits
Till he sees the postern gates
Slowly, silently unclose,
And before him stand, divine
In the moonlight hyaline,
Smiling Princess Badoura.

Oh, the joy that fills her heart
Once again to hear his voice,
Once again to feel his kiss!
All the birds that see rejoice,
Singing with melodious art,
"Ne'er before was love like this!"
What is now the world to her,—
Noble, princely flatterer,
Playing each his petty part?
Here beneath the gemméd skies,
Here is bliss and paradise!
Trustful Princess Badoura.

Hearken! on her startled ear
Falls a low and boding sound;
Is it but the winds that blow?
Is it but the kennelled hound?
Through her bosom thrills a fear
As the silent moments go.
Suddenly a scimeter
Flashes like a falling star,
And upon the grassy ground,
With the love-light in his eyes
Fading fast, her lover lies,
Woful Princess Badoura.

Clinton Scottard.

FROM LIBBY TO FREEDOM.

AFTER the fight on the 25th of June, in front of the intrenchments at Fair Oaks, I lay sick in my tent, one of the many victims of the Chickahominy swamps. At nine P.M. on the 28th we were ordered to get ready to march at a moment's notice, and to destroy all stores, camp-equipage, munitions of war, officers' baggage, etc. Our regiment, or rather what was left of it after the continuous fighting, was allowed two wagons: one we filled with ammunition, and the other with rations and regimental books and papers. Almost everything was destroyed,—new rifles bent, rations spilled into the mud, tents cut to pieces, officers' baggage torn into shreds. No fires were allowed. The men began to talk about "skedaddling," and the timid ones packed hurriedly and quietly sneaked away to follow the teams.

The darkness was unbroken, save in the direction of the White House, where a reddened sky gave evidence that the destruction of government property was going on. All kinds of rumors were whispered: "We were surrounded." "Hooker's division was left to hold the rear and take care of itself." Many were the surmises as to our destination. Yorktown was the opinion of most; the James River was spoken of.

This continued until morning, and still no orders to move. At about eight o'clock, however, the line was formed, and the whole division filed down the road.

Our surgeon had promised to send an ambulance for a sick lieutenant and myself, and the provost stopped at the front of my tent to say that it was across the road. The lieutenant went out to see where it was, but came back saying that it was gone. The driver was timid and afraid to stay.

At this depressing news, we left our tent and went across the road to an old house that had been used as a hospital. A signal-officer of Porter's corps passed, and I called to him to send us an ambulance or horses. He knew me, so he promised, and galloped off.

He had scarcely gone, when the rebels poured yelling over the embankment at Redoubt No. 3. The advance-guard entered the house and formally made us prisoners, but the officer said that no guard would be placed over us if we would promise not to try to escape. As we were barely able to stagger, we gave the required promise.

Our rear-guard soon began to fire on the advancing rebels, whereupon a large body of them poured out of the woods on our right, and our little house of refuge was between two fires. The air was full of whizzing shells.

In the midst of it all, we were taken before a major, who asked us many questions about the movements and strength of our army. On our declining to answer, he became furious, and ordered us to be taken to the rear.

At the other side of the opening we met the wagons provided for such prisoners as were unable to walk; into one of them the lieutenant

and myself were told to climb, and we soon found ourselves *en route* for Richmond. The sun blazed down upon us as we bumped along, faint with hunger and parched with thirst. I implored the guard to stop and get us a drink, but he refused. I gave vent to a forcible remonstrance, when he cocked his piece, brought it to his shoulder, put his finger on the trigger, and coolly remarked, "What's that you say, Yank?" I subsided with a groan.

At six o'clock we drove into Richmond. It was Sunday, and the streets were thronged with people, who flocked around the wagons and stared at the prisoners. We were taken to Main Street, and driven slowly along the north side the entire length of the crowded thoroughfare, and then back again along the south side. Having thus gratified the populace with a sight of the last batch of captured Yankees, our guard conducted us up Carey Street to the famous tobacco-warehouse known as Libby Prison.

We didn't feel particularly cheerful as we came in sight of the prison, an immense building, with thousands of heads dimly visible through the barred windows. The lieutenant and I were taken before the commandant of the prison, questioned, and examined. Finding no weapons,—we had destroyed our side-arms before capture,—the commandant allowed us to retain our money, and I was also permitted to keep my blanket. We were then taken to the lower floor, and turned into the room reserved for officers. There we found one hundred and ninety fellow-sufferers, who crowded around us, asking dozens of questions concerning the movements and condition of our army.

The room was very long, extending the whole depth of the warehouse, but comparatively narrow. It was lighted and ventilated by three windows at one end and two windows and a door at the other. These apertures were constantly surrounded by prisoners anxious for a breath of fresh air or a sight of blue sky.

If by chance a head approached too near a window, there would come the warning thrust of a bayonet, or, very likely, a shot, accompanied with the admonition, "Learn to keep your head in, Yank."

The floor was covered with a thick paste of mud and slime: tables, chairs, or cots there were none.

Captain McC., of the Fourth, shared his supper with us, and then, spreading my blanket on the muddy floor, the lieutenant and I lay down and were soon fast asleep.

We were roused in the morning by the restless tramp of the early risers, astir to watch the preparations for breakfast. A squad of privates, each bearing a bucket filled with hunks of dry bread, filed through the room, depositing the buckets at regular intervals along the floor; a second squad followed with buckets of stewed meat. This performance was repeated three times a day, with occasional slight variations in the contents of the buckets. Of course there were no knives, forks, or spoons. The prisoners, I found, had formed themselves into messes, and through the agency of the guard had bought such things as they could not do without. New-comers had to dive into the buckets and "come the grab game" or go hungry. On the third day I became a member of Mess No. 7, and the sergeant of the guard bought

for me two inches of brown soap, which cost me seventy-five cents; a common towel, one dollar; a knife and fork, each fifty cents; and a tin cup, fifty cents.

The second day I heard Colonel Sweitzer speak to the officer of the guard about a blanket for a wounded man. Looking in the direction he pointed, I could scarcely believe my eyes when I saw my old friend and boon companion, Will R——, almost scalped. I stepped up and spoke his name, when he threw his arms around me, kissed me violently, and almost broke my meerschaum. What a long talk we had! In our walk up and down the prison floor, we named each window, corner, and door after some familiar haunt at home. We talked so much of home that I dreamt of it all night, and woke to find myself lying on the dirty prison floor. The rations had been brought in and eaten up. I consoled myself with my pipe.

Will and I paid many visits to our lady friends, whom we located at the windows, because they were always crowded with admirers.

On the Fourth of July all the prisoners in Libby were marched, closely guarded, through the middle of the street to Eighteenth Street, between Main and Carey, and were given quarters in a four-story tobacco-factory known as Prison No. 6. Here we were provided with slat beds, which were worse than the floor; blankets, which Uncle Sam sent us; and two tables to each floor, but no seats. Will and I got adjoining beds next a window on the fourth floor. We were not restricted to one room, as at Libby, but could roam freely over the whole building, and even go out into the little alley-way between the prison and the cook-house in the rear, which alley was, of course, boarded up and closely guarded.

Each mess was allowed a servant,—one of our Union privates,—and twice a day these men were sent under guard to a certain pump for drinking-water. By assuming their uniform, we were permitted, one or two at a time, to go in their place. This was the greatest delight of our prison life,—to walk the streets of Richmond in our shirt-sleeves, under guard, carrying a bucket of water. We always marched with precision, whistling some patriotic air, to the disgust of the citizens. Little boys would skedaddle at our approach, and peep out at us from behind corners; some ladies would cross the street to avoid us; occasionally we received a smile of sympathy, or perchance a note slipped slyly into our eager hands. Standing at the pump one day, I was asked, by a good-looking mulatto girl, to show her the horn on my head.

Our occupations in-doors were various. Card-parties were organized, every game ever heard of was played, and many new ones were invented. Each officer bought a book, and by exchanging we could keep ourselves in reading-matter. Prayer-meetings, too, were formed, and kept up morning and evening the whole time I was there,—one of the officers lecturing at each meeting.

The gas was turned off at nine o'clock, and then, to the disgust of a few, our operatic performance would begin. Captain D. generally started up with the "Troubadours;" we would all join in, each with his favorite air, with as much lung-force as our limited rations permitted, enlivening the harmonious medley by jingling together the

plates of the tobacco-presses. Some one would upset another's bed, a grand finale which generally brought in the guard, and then, as if by magic, all would be energetically snoring.

We were furnished with half-rations of bread and meat. Those lucky enough to have money bought coffee,—burnt rye seventy-five cents a pound, real coffee two dollars and fifty cents. Butter was one dollar a pound, eggs one dollar a dozen, tea sixteen dollars a pound. Eating was therefore an expensive amusement.

Another interesting occupation was washing. I saw one colonel go all day without his shirt while he washed it and hung it out the window to dry. I often spent a whole hour and twenty-five cents' worth of soap upon a shirt, and then had the satisfaction of knowing that it looked quite as well before I began.

Sitting before our window one day, Will and I were treated to the sight of a fair rebel in an adjoining yard; evidently there to see and be seen by the Yankees. She smiled; we sent a kiss; we brought a field-glass to bear upon her, at which she kissed her lovely Secesh hand to us. We were in ecstasies. Said Will, "Owners for her, Jacky?" Said I, "No, she is mine: I kissed my hand first." We did not dispute about possession, for she disappeared, and we never saw her again.

A few days later two visions of loveliness appeared in another yard. We both exclaimed at once, "I speak for the one with the black hair!" But, without waiting to decide who should be the happy owner of the sable-tressed damsel, we endeavored by means of signs to communicate our admiration and attachment, and even began to think of joining the Southern cause. (?) After the angels left, we fell to composing love-letters, and used up fifty cents' worth of paper at five cents a sheet in that absorbing occupation. The next morning they shone upon us again, this time armed with slate and pencil; but we could not make out what they wrote. We despatched our notes by means of darts constructed out of fragments torn from the rafters, and our enchanters soon retired to read their *billets-doux*. The next day they brought a large slate and chalk, and, aided by our field-glass, we succeeded in deciphering their writing. The first sentence of tender emotion was addressed to a lieutenant of the "Bucktails," modestly asking for the bucktail off his hat: he promptly replied that "he didn't see it." They then bribed the guard to bring us a delicate epistle in which they informed us that they were working in an adjacent millinery-shop where they were apprenticed. When the rafters could yield us no more material for our darts, one of the boys discovered a keg of nails on the first floor, and we found that by freighting a note with several nails we could easily land it at the feet of the pair. In this way the whole keg was speedily emptied into the yard, and the correspondence was forced to come to an untimely end.

My meerschaum was a source of great consolation. Tobacco in Richmond was good and cheap, and except when eating or sleeping I was smoking. What a beautiful color the bowl had become! On the marches and fights in the Peninsula it was my bosom companion. I remember at Fair Oaks when I lit it during the fight, how much

more anxiety I felt lest my pipe should be struck by one of those musical missiles rather than my own miserable body. So far I had eclipsed McClellan, and gotten into Richmond before the Fourth of July. The morning dawned upon my twenty-second birthday. I ate my breakfast sadly and went down to wash. To wash my face I was compelled to remove the meerschaum from my mouth, and I laid it on an adjacent shelf. When I took the towel from my face and put out my hand for the beloved, it was gone! My darling had actually been kidnapped from under my eyes. Fancy my feelings! I sat on the edge of my bed, the empty case in my hand, and thought of the many happy birthdays I had spent, and then of my meerschaum: it was almost beyond endurance.

One day a North-Carolinian was on guard at one of the first-floor windows, and in a sly conversation he said he was tired of the South and was going to desert and go North. Will and I promised him the position of sergeant in the Union army if he would aid us to escape. He vowed to do his best, and added that he should be on guard again the next Monday on the first relief, and that then we could get over the piece of fence he would be guarding and be far away before anything was discovered. We got all ready and waited anxiously for the appointed hour. Monday came; we watched eagerly for the gaunt Carolinian, but he did not come on, and we never saw him again. He must have been suspected. He had told us he was often under guard himself, was a conscript, and felt no interest in the Southern cause.

We were grievously disappointed, but lost no time in returning to another project we had had on hand. Between the prison and the house adjoining was a narrow alley, which was boarded up and closely guarded to prevent the prisoners from breaking through. During many dark nights Will and I had been busy cutting around the spikes, so that the boards would slide off without making a noise. On the evening of July 29, a travelled captain, a member of General Wool's staff, was discoursing to the boys about the Chinese, and in the laughter that followed the ancient anecdote of roast pig, Lieutenant M., of the First Long Island, Will, and myself stole out of the house, and slipped off the board we had been working at. Looking down the alley, we could see two guards, one on each side, with their muskets lying across their laps. Now, by going into the alley, up one pair of stairs and down another, we could go out the next alley as if coming from the next house. But at the top of the stairs we had often heard a dog bark. It was about half-past nine, and very dark. We slipped into the alley, stole on tiptoe half-way up the flight of steps, then turned and clattered noisily down, marched boldly down the alley, stepped right over the guards, and turned to our left toward Main Street, conversing in a familiar manner, but momentarily expecting a bullet in our backs. We turned up Main Street, and had gone but a little way when we met the provost-guard coming down. We hastily entered the nearest shop, which proved to be that of "the girl with the black hair." She received us kindly, notwithstanding her surprise, and, promising not to betray us, took us into a little back parlor to wait until the guard had gotten well out of the way. Lieutenant

M. sat down at the piano, and, in the exhilaration of our spirits, we tempted fortune with the strains of "Hail Columbia" and the "Star-Spangled Banner." We talked a little, and then we went out, we knew not where. We had left our shoulder-strapped coats behind, and wore only flannel shirts and our uniform trousers. We walked up into the aristocratic part of town, where we saw young soldiers sitting on the porches, talking to the girls; passed the hotels, which were swarming with rebel officers; then, turning into a side-street, sat down on a curb-stone to hold a council. After some talk, we decided to go to a certain colored barber who had been in prison several times to shave us, and ask him to keep us till morning. We found his shop closed, and while we were hammering on the door a watchman came along, turning off the gas. He ordered us away, and we sought out another sympathizer; but his place, too, was closed, and, the same watchman appearing in sight, we turned into an alley to avoid him. We tried the market-place, but found it the head-quarters for all guards. Afraid that our blue trousers would betray us, we pushed on into a deserted street, where we sat down on the steps of a warehouse, intending to remain there the rest of the night. It was just two o'clock. We were very tired, being unused to exercise, and presently left the steps to lie down on a cellar-door, where we, three Federal officers, partly in uniform, slumbered peacefully in the heart of the Confederacy.

The night was chilly, and the hinges and locks on the cellar-door, no less than the fact that we were within sight of Father Jefferson's mansion, tended to keep us semi-conscious. On awakening at day-break we felt no surprise at our situation. We began to walk, intending to meander around until the barber or some other friend should open up; but by degrees we grew bolder, and ventured into a coffee-house, where, in company with some soldiers and farmers, we had a cup of so-called coffee and two doughnuts each. Refreshed by this sumptuous breakfast, we directed our steps toward a certain house where we knew there was a good Union man who wanted to go North. On our way we saw the lieutenant commanding our prison, but, as he did not know that we had escaped, he was not looking for us. We learned afterwards that the boys answered for us at roll-call for several mornings after our escape, thus giving us a good start.

We soon reached the home of our friend, a thriving baker, whose daughter, by the way, was engaged to be married to a lieutenant of the Fourth New Jersey. The spark of love had been ignited by "muck" pies sent by the said daughter to the said lieutenant, and many cigars had fanned the flame. Upon introducing ourselves to the baker, he confessed frankly that he was averse to receiving escaped prisoners, but told us we might remain until his son should come in. While waiting in the shop, some soldiers entered to buy cakes. They took a good stare at us, but went away without saying anything. We were growing very nervous, but in about half an hour the son or cousin—I forget the relationship—came in. His name was MacIvor. He greeted us cordially, took us into a back room, and then went out again to get us a change of clothing. We kept very quiet, for the rear windows of the prison overlooked the baker's back yard: indeed, it

was by means of signs and signals cautiously made by MacIvor for the benefit of the prisoners that we had discovered the Union sentiments of the family. On MacIvor's return he was accompanied by a lady and gentleman who brought us a complete outfit, together with papers, tobacco, matches (seventy-five cents a box), a shawl, and everything we required.

The friendly barber came in, too, direct from the prison, bringing us a message from General McCall, who advised us, in view of the difficulties ahead, to return to the prison and give ourselves up. But we had found freedom too sweet to be relinquished without a struggle, and we agreed to go ahead and risk getting through the lines. We took dinner with the baker and his daughter, particularly the daughter, and left the house at two o'clock in the afternoon, three of the raggedest-looking villains you ever saw.

We kept on our blue trousers under the disguise. Will wore a linen coat, which subsequently got torn into shreds going through the woods. I carried a hatchet, and MacIvor a shawl. Mac had been working in the Eagle Foundry a few months before, and at that time had an exemption-paper given him. It had expired, and he could not get it renewed, and was therefore anxious to escape North to avoid the conscription. With this paper for a copy, I forged a similar one, with alterations of names and dates, for each one of us.

After a long debate, we decided to make a bee-line for the White House, in hopes that the place might be in possession of the Union forces. We started out by twos, and went through the town in a northeasterly direction, getting a good view of the surrounding earth-works. About two miles from the city, we saw a picket sitting by the side of the road. Turning off, we attempted to pass between him and the next picket, but he shouted to us, and called the corporal of the guard. That officer promptly appeared, and demanded to know what we were doing out there, and what regiment we belonged to. We answered that we were not soldiers, but were going out for blackberries, and showed him our exemption-papers. But he persisted in his refusal to let us go through, and Mac began to argue with him angrily, which imprudence came near causing our arrest; but we were finally allowed to go back toward Richmond. We were much discouraged, and feared that we should have to wait till night and then try to crawl out under cover of the darkness. As we strolled along, discussing our altered plans, we were suddenly hailed by another picket:

"Where are you going? Show your pass."

We told him we were on a visit to a friend in the Fifth Virginia Artillery.

"Well, you can go back the way you came, for you can't get in here."

He had not seen us until we were *outside* the line, and, thinking that we were trying to get *in*, ordered us in the very direction we were so anxious to take. Our surprise and delight nearly betrayed us, but, hastily recovering ourselves, we set out in the indicated way, chuckling over our good fortune.

We passed many camps of artillery, and until dark could hear the

drums beating around the town. Just out of sight of the pickets, we turned aside into a wood, in the heart of which we made a tent out of our shawl, and quickly crept under it, for it had begun to rain. All night long we heard the cavalry scouts, but they did not approach us. In the morning we were a sight to behold. The mosquitoes had so bitten our faces and hands that we bore a family resemblance to the Benicia Boy after his struggle for the champion belt. The lid of my left eye was so swollen I could not lift it. At daybreak, in the still pouring rain, we started through the woods, keeping in a northeasterly direction, never speaking above a whisper, and before long reached the famous Chickahominy. The bridges had been burnt, but we found one slippery, slimy log in position. Crawling carefully over this, we soon came to the place where the Union pickets had been stationed, and where McCall's division had been encamped. Here we had a glorious feast of huckleberries, and then pushed on, keeping off the roads for fear of cavalry scouts. The rain continued to fall in torrents. At one o'clock we passed Gaines's Mill. At three o'clock we were so hungry that we ventured out of the woods to look for a house where we might get some dinner. The first one we struck belonged to a Dr. Tyler. Mrs. Tyler received us on the porch, ordered some dinner cooked, and then began to ask questions:

"Where are you all from, gentlemen? Where are you going? What are your names?"

Of course we could not give a very satisfactory account of ourselves, but there were only Mrs. Tyler, her charming daughter, and the servants at home, and we had no fear of their arresting us. But, while congratulating ourselves, a squad of cavalry clattered down the road, halted at the gate, and peered up at us through the pouring rain. We could scarcely conceal our alarm, for Mrs. Tyler had told us that the country round about was full of deserters, and that the cavalry were capturing them every day. Presently she inquired if we were not deserters. Whether the men hated to alight in the rain and mud, or whether it was simply our usual good fortune befriending us, we could not tell, but, after some hesitation, the squad galloped off, and we were left to eat our dinner in peace. Ham, eggs, buttermilk, and the invariable hoe-cake tasted delicious to the half-starved refugees. We paid Mrs. Tyler in Confederate money, and departed, taking some corn-bread in our pockets.

We made our way through woods and swamps until dusk, when on the edge of a clearing we stumbled on an old deserted school-house, with a stove in it. Here we resolved to stay all night and dry our clothes, which were completely drenched. At ten o'clock we built a fire, hung our clothes around the stove, and lay down on a bench, with a log of wood for a pillow. At daybreak we were off again. Our corn-bread having become quite sour and unfit to eat, we breakfasted upon huckleberries. Woods, fields, swamps, and creeks alternated under our weary feet until three o'clock, when we struck the Pamunkey River. We gave three cheers in a subdued whisper, and followed the bank on the lookout for a boat. A dense jungle nearly stopped our progress: it was full of snakes, and so thickly overgrown that it took a vigorous use of

the hatchet to enable us to make our way through. Below this we saw a boat on the other side of the river, and decided to wait till nightfall, then swim across, get into it, and row down the stream. Hunger got the better of us before it was time to make the attempt, and, leaving Mac in the hiding-place to keep an eye on the boat, we sallied forth in quest of rations. We soon reached an immense plantation called New Castle, and, going to one of the numerous negro-huts, asked for corn-cake. An old woman in charge of a battalion of about seventy-five pickaninnies, from one to two years old, whom she was feeding with bread and milk, referred us to the overseer, Mr. Patterson. We thought it would be wiser not to risk the encounter; but, as we turned to go, he came towards us. We made a requisition for rations after the usual form. Without noticing our polite request, he accused us of being deserters. We protested, and showed our papers, but did not succeed in giving very satisfactory answers to his numerous questions. He agreed to give us some supper, notwithstanding, and we sat on his porch while the darky woman made some corn-cake and fried some bacon. The old woman was slow, and the overseer talkative. To relieve his anxiety, Lieutenant M. got on the swing and swung furiously. The operation caused his blue trousers to work out at the top, and they showed about three inches, in full view of Mr. Patterson. The rest of us sat still, in cold perspiration. The supper was very long preparing, and, after it was ready, our host delayed asking us to sit down. We began to suspect that he had arranged a trap for us, and watched him closely while despatching our supper as quickly as possible. Paying him, as we had done elsewhere, we returned with all possible speed to the place where we had left Mac. From Mr. Patterson's remarks we had learned that the Confederates still held the White House: so we were forced to abandon the idea of going down the Pamunkey. Re-joining Mac, we swam across the river, and walked briskly until nine o'clock, spurred on by the fear that the overseer had informed the scouts of our suspicious appearance. Thirty dollars reward was given by the rebel government for each deserter apprehended, and the scouts were always on the alert. At nine o'clock we lay down in the middle of an immense wheat-field, recently cut and shocked, lit our pipes, talked awhile in low whispers, then dropped asleep. At dawn we awoke, soaked with dew, our muscles so stiff that we felt like jointed dolls, unable to move of ourselves. Groaning over our aching bones, we proceeded slowly through the long wet grass, marching half an hour and resting an hour, until the sun came out and warmed us up.

We advanced cautiously in line of battle, but not throwing out skirmishers, upon a house, which proved to be occupied by the slaves of a nabob who lived across the river. Here we procured a sumptuous breakfast of herring and ash-cake. To make this appetizing cake, take corn meal and water, in darky hands, pat the mixture into a ball, slap it into the fire, and cover it with ashes. After "a right smart while," rake it out, scrape off the ashes and the burnt meal, and, if anything is left, that is ash-cake. At this extensive restaurant they charged us two dollars. We now got well under way, advanced rapidly and steadily, and ventured to take a road that led in our direction. We ran

across a picturesque spring-house, a jug of buttermilk cooling within. We immediately flanked said jug, and eventually surrounded said milk; said milk proved to be Secesh, was confiscated, and dealt out to a portion of the Federal army. Farther on, near a very elegant farm-house, we met a contraband, who informed us that his master, Captain Carter, of the Virginia Artillery, had gone down to the White House that morning, because the gun-boats were coming up. He added that none of the white folks were at home. We said we were very sorry, that we had called to see Captain Carter on business, and then coolly asked the ducky if he could give us some dinner. "Certainly," was his response: so we walked over the lawn and through a splendid orchard and ended up in the parlor. Lieutenant M. enlivened our hearts with the "Star-Spangled Banner" and the "Red, White, and Blue" on one of Chickering's best. Dinner was served on the front piazza, and we sat down to and ate heartily of broiled chicken, ham and eggs, sliced tomatoes, and iced milk, off china, silver, and cut glass. A tidy black waiter in attendance told us all about the captain's family; he had two sons in the Confederate army, both lieutenants. One of the slaves took a fancy to our shawl, and, as our money had given out, we sold it to him for eight dollars, Confederate currency, and then took our departure, leaving our names and compliments for Captain Carter.

Lighting our pipes, we set out on the road to the West Point Ferry. We were in prime marching order, and made good time. A sharp bend in the road brought us suddenly to a small village, where there was a store, with a number of white men standing about. We put on a bold face, and, marching right up to the store, asked where we could get a drink of water. One of the men replied that his boy was just going to the spring and that we might go along. The spring was across the road in the woods. On the way over, the boy told us that four men had stopped at his father's store that morning, and a little while after had been arrested as deserters by the cavalry. He wanted to know if we were not deserters, but we gave him to understand that we had been employed to work on the railroad the Yankees had spoiled. He was very anxious we should go back and see his father, so we promised to follow him when we should be rested, but as soon as he was out of sight we left that unwholesome part of the country. Making our way through what the boy had called Runaway Woods, we struck the road about two miles below the hamlet, and pushed on as fast as our weary limbs could carry us.

We resolved to stop for the night at the first house we came to, for we had no blanket. The first house proved to be the residence of a wealthy planter, so we were afraid to risk it; but we vowed to stop at the next house if Beauregard himself should live there. Three miles farther on we reached a hospitable-looking mansion; but our courage quickly evaporated on being told by a contraband that Dr. Douglas lived there, and that two gentlemen were staying with him. We felt assured that it would be suicide to linger in that neighborhood, and went on again, foot-sore and weary. At nine o'clock we arrived at the little town called King William Court-House, and in sheer desperation marched into the only hotel and demanded supper. Very shortly after

supper we sought our beds,—real beds, with sheets and pillows,—but before going to sleep we took the precaution of singing “Maryland, my Maryland,” and the “Bonny Blue Flag.” The next day was Sunday. On going into the dining-room in the morning we observed a cavalry officer sitting at the table. Although our hearts sank at the sight, it was no time to hesitate, so we sat down and ordered breakfast. The officer soon got up and went out. We finished our breakfast and went around outside to pay the bill: there stood the officer beside his horse, with a sardonic smile on his countenance. While settling with the landlord, we asked, loud enough for the officer to hear, how far it was to the nearest church, and then started off in the direction indicated. About a mile down the road we turned off to a spring, and while there saw the officer go flying past. We were not yet certain that he was after us, but we felt reasonably assured that one man could not capture four men: so, lighting our pipes, we again took the road. Three old colored women, on their way to church, stopped us, and conveyed the interesting information that three soldiers had just gone past on the lookout for us. We saw at once that we should have to leave the road or be captured: so we hid in the bushes to wait for Mac, who had lingered behind, picking blackberries. Presently the same officer, reinforced by two privates, came in sight. Two more privates from the opposite direction joined him. They met quite near our hiding-place, and began to examine our tracks in the dusty road, but we had made so many marks that they were baffled, and could not decide which way we had gone. We lay quite still, scarcely daring to breathe. After a short consultation, two soldiers turned one way, and three the other, and all galloped off furiously. We concluded that Mac would be captured, and that the best thing for us to do was to skedaddle: so, turning to our left into the woods, we went at double-quick until an immense swamp reduced us to common time. In the afternoon it began to rain. On the other side of the woods we came upon a small white cottage, where we decided to ask for food. What was our surprise on entering to behold eight or ten ladies sitting around the dinner-table! Of course we blushed painfully, but recovered ourselves on observing that the ladies were more embarrassed than we; this giving us courage, we proceeded to make ourselves agreeable. The ladies were dressed in low-necked, short-sleeved summer dresses, with crinoline of the proper proportion. Two of them were ravishingly beautiful: one in particular lacerated my heart distressingly. When they rose, blushing, from the table, we made the discovery that not one of them had on shoes or stockings. The grandmother was there, and she explained that shoes were so expensive they had all agreed not to wear any during the summer months. Pretty little rosy feet! how quickly they were hidden from view! We were invited to eat some dinner, and then we sat and talked until the rain was over. The lady of the house refused our proffered payment,—the first person that had so refused since our leaving Richmond. We had not gone two paces when with one impulse we turned back and told our hostess we would intrust a secret to her if she would keep it for two days. She promised, and we gave her our true names, rank in the Union army, and the circumstances of our

presence in that part of the country. She directed us to the Mattaponi River, and we parted the best of friends.

Having reached the river, we hunted up and down the banks for a boat, but, not finding one, we retraced our steps about a mile to a small creek, where we had discovered a skiff above a mill-dam. Dragging it to the top of the dam, we got in and slid down the slippery rocks. The creek we found too shallow to float the skiff, so we were compelled to drag it over the sand and around places choked up with logs; which extra labor so retarded our progress that when we finally succeeded in reaching the river we found a rising tide. We had only one oar, so we paddled under some bushes, tied up, and masked the stern of the boat with boughs. There we smoked our last bit of tobacco, and then lay, without speaking above a whisper, until eight o'clock. By that time it was quite dark, and the tide had begun to run out.

We agreed that two should lie down in the boat, and one should paddle, on hour reliefs. Down the silent stream we floated, never daring to speak a word. At midnight I found myself in the stern, my hands blistered, my eyelids drooping, my two comrades asleep in the bottom of the boat. The moon had set, and it was very dark. The tide had run out, so I made an attempt to land. The shore was low and marshy, covered with long flags growing out of the oozing mud; nothing to tie to, and no place to land. I paddled across the wide dark river; the other side was the sand. Some floating phosphorus, stirred up by my oar, glowed and sparkled in the darkness. I headed back for the opposite shore, and, finding a fishing-stake, tied the boat-chain up as high as I could reach, and then lay down to sleep.

At dawn the next morning the tide was again going out. We floated slowly down with it on the lookout for oars. Discovering a plank by an old mill, we succeeded in breaking it into something the shape of an oar, and with its help we rowed to where we saw a skiff under a bank.

On the top of the bank there was a man chopping wood, so we rowed, as cautiously as possible, quite near the skiff, but found no oars. Seeing the handle of one sticking out of the bushes a short distance above, I took off my shoes, stole up, pulled at the oar, and was soon back in the boat and off down the river.

At noon the tide turned, so we drew up at a large deserted mansion, hid the boat, and lay down on the grass to sleep. Later in the afternoon we explored the premises. The house was of colonial architecture,—very high ceilings, immense hall, grand stairway, most of the rooms panelled and carved, but everything had gone to decay. A blight lay even upon the surrounding vegetation. In the orchard the apples were sour and wormy, and, though we found some luscious-looking blackberries, they proved to be as bitter as gall. Pigs were in the spring, snakes showed themselves everywhere, and one little half-starved dog ran up to us whining piteously. We found plenty of rebel letters and documents of ancient date lying in the closets and littering the floors. Making a battering-ram of a fence-rail, we broke open the door of a boat-house, in which we discovered rods, lines, reels, and hooks, but, above all, a first-rate pair of oars. Before leaving, we wrote with char-

coal, in big letters, on the white walls of the drawing-room, our names, and the date of our escape from Prison No. 6, adding, with youthful exuberance, "On our way to freedom. The Union must and shall be preserved."

At dusk we embarked anew. The dog whined to be taken along, but his company would have been too risky, and we were forced to leave the poor beast howling dismally on the landing. With our new oars we could make our little boat fairly skim over the water. We divided the watch into an hour at the oars and half an hour at the rudder; in this way all three were kept busy; no chance to get a wink of sleep. The river was very wide. A wind sprang up, and the waves washed pitilessly over our frail little bark. As the tide turned in the night, we pulled up under some bushes, and succeeded in snatching a little sleep. At eight o'clock next morning we again got under way. To the right of us lay a little town,—what one we could not tell: so, although half starved, we dared not attempt to land. As we started down the middle of the stream, there crossed in front of us a skiff, in whose stern sat a rebel officer, leading his swimming horse. Behind us there appeared a man who seemed determined to keep us in view. Opposite the town he put to shore. Exchanging his skiff for a schooner, and reinforced by several men, he set out, to our great dismay, in open pursuit. Of course the schooner gained rapidly upon us, so we tried to land, in order to take to the woods, but, as usual, could not find a landing-place. We had had no food for thirty-six hours, and were thoroughly exhausted. Will suddenly gave out altogether, and was unable to pull a stroke. I took his place, he went to the rudder, and, with the energy of despair, we pulled for the opposite shore. The schooner followed, and the men aboard began firing. About twenty feet from shore, Will exclaimed, "I see a picket!" And, sure enough, half a dozen soldiers promptly appeared and pointed their guns at us. Between two fires, there was nothing more to be done: so we rowed slowly to shore and yielded ourselves prisoners. Our captors said they belonged to Stuart's Cavalry, and we sadly concluded that the game was up. Their blue uniforms gave us no encouragement, for so many rebel soldiers wore captured Yankee garments that it was impossible to judge any small squad by their clothes. When we were delivered up at the picket head-quarters, what was our joy to find that we had been "captured" by the Fifth Pennsylvania Cavalry, a regiment recruited from our own home, and full of personal friends! The boys crowded around in friendly interest and curiosity, and gave us a perfect ovation. Ragged, bedraggled, unkempt, and unshaven, strangers to soap since leaving Richmond, we were the lions of the hour.

Adjutant Frank Robinson provided us with rations, clothes, and horses, and sent us to Williamsburg, where for two days we were the guests of Colonel Campbell, the military governor.

At breakfast the first morning, an orderly entered and whispered to the colonel, who shook his head and said, "Not now." Again the orderly came and whispered, and I caught the words, "But he says he knows these gentlemen." I looked up: "Who is it, colonel?" and in the slight hush that followed there came to our ears the signal-whistle,

"Bob White! Bob, Bob White!" that we four had agreed upon as the call to bring us together when separated in the woods.

"It is MacIvor!" we shouted, and rushed out, to find the poor fellow in the guard-house. He had been captured by our troops, but, owing to his Southern pronunciation, his story was disbelieved, and he was regarded as a spy. It seems that when he had found himself separated from the rest of us he had passed himself off as one of the villagers,—an easy matter, with his Southern speech,—and, apparently joining in the pursuit, had succeeded in turning the scouts in the wrong direction,—a lucky thing for us, for he said the bloodhounds were put on the scent, and the termination might have been more than commonly unpleasant.

After having profited largely by Colonel Campbell's hospitality, we steamed up the James River to Harrison's Landing, where we reported to General McClellan, and gave to the Secret Service Department an account of our escape, together with what information we had been able to collect about the movements of the rebel troops and the condition of the fortifications around Richmond.

General McClellan promised us each a furlough, and in a most agreeable atmosphere of good fortune and local fame we rejoined our respective regiments.

J. M. Oakley.

BIRD-LANGUAGE.

HARK, love, while through this wood we walk,
 Beneath melodious trees,
 How wrens with redbreasts ever talk
 What tuneful words they please!

Lured by their feathered clans and sects,
 The listener lightly notes
 Those airy and dulcet dialects
 That bubble from birds' throats.

Ah, joy, could we once clearly greet
 The meanings gay that throng
 Their silvery idioms and their sweet
 Provincialisms of song!

No graybeard linguist, love, could vie
 With our large learning, then!
 You'd speak to me in Redbreast . . . I
 Would answer you in Wren!

Edgar Fawcett.

WITH GAUGE & SWALLOW.*

NO. V.—A SHATTERED IDOL.

"DO you like the country, Mr. Fountain?"

There was a yearning quaver in Mr. Burrill's voice as he asked the question. He stood looking down upon the street, where men were sweltering on the sunny side, and mopping their heads in the shadow. It was early summer. The sun was hot by day, but the breeze came coolly up the bay at night, and the tide of life yet ran strong and bright along the crowded thoroughfares. The new leaves were still a glossy green. The dust had not yet penetrated everywhere. The streets and roofs were washed with frequent showers. It was just at that season when the city-dweller dreams of green fields and flowery glades, not because the city is uncomfortable, but because of the beauty its glimpses of verdure suggest.

I am not enthusiastic over country life. I was "raised," as we say, "on a farm," and my memories of that time are chiefly of dirt, discomfort, and weariness. My youth was not one of ease or pleasure, and I seldom look back to it regretfully. In nature's most perfect moods, and under the most favorable conditions, the country is no doubt unapproachable,—a type of heaven. But these moods are so rare, and the requisite conditions so seldom concur, that the country-bred Apostle, "in the spirit," upon Patmos, dreamed of heaven as a city having but a single tree. In fact, none of the Biblical writers seem to think a permanent residence in the country a thing to be desired. In this I agree with them. I should hate to think of my mother condemned to an eternity of country life. I am sure her celestial vision was of an "eternal city."

"I suppose so," was, therefore, my not very hearty answer to Burrill's question.

"Oh, I don't mean to live in," said the old man, apologetically, as if he divined my thought, "but just to pass a day, to dream, to loiter in."

"At a resort?"

"Oh, no, no," with a gesture of disgust; "just in the country,—alone or with a friend,—doing nothing, you know."

I assented with a shrug.

"Oh, you don't know what I mean at all. In London, now,—you know I never lived in the country, and never was there more than a week at a time, if so long, before I came here. I didn't belong to what is called society, the little class that stands for all English life to the American. I never shot nor hunted, never was on a horse in my life, and never fished for anything more gamy than a roach in the old country. But there is one thing that one living there has the advantage of us in. He can go to the country for a day or two, and

not be in a caravansary. By running out a few miles on the railway, with an hour or an hour and a half's walk, if he knows the country, he can always find a tidy little public with a bit of water or wood handy, where he can be really alone, have a good meal served in his room, enjoy a quiet evening, get a good bed, and run back to town for his day's work, if he likes.

"No, you cannot get it here," he continued, seeing me shake my head, "and I miss it, I really do, you know,—especially since Minton left us."

The old man sat down, turned his office-chair half around, so that his back was towards me, and drummed absently on the rail that enclosed his desk. He had a great affection for Minton, and for his wife too, and had been very lonely since their departure, though hardly a day passed that he did not hear from one or the other. I think he hardly knew how much they were to him until they had gone. As for myself, I ought to have been glad Minton was no longer in the office, but I was not. I don't think anybody was, least of all Mr. Gauge and Mr. Swallow. I hardly knew which of the partners missed him most. He was so thorough and reliable that they had come to lean on him more than they knew; yet he made so little fuss about his work that they scarcely realized how much he did. I always thought of him as a sort of chief-of-staff for the firm, subject to orders, yet commanding where not specifically directed, while Bronson was more like an aide-de-camp, of high rank, but no inherent authority. I had no special reason to like him. He had been kind to me, but in a sort of half-amused way that used to vex me sometimes. Yet I think he really liked me, and I was glad to be remembered in his letters.

His departure was in some sense a decided advantage to me. While it did not cause an immediate increase of salary, it undoubtedly brought me forward. His work had to be distributed among the others in the office, and a certain share of it fell to me,—more important work than I had done before. Then, too, it brought me nearer to Burrill. I had always thought it would be to my interest to cultivate the old man, and, besides that, I really was fond of him. Up to that time, however, I had little idea how much it might be worth my while to stand well in his regard. I had, indeed, noticed that for some time the partners had shown him unusual deference. I do not know that he was consulted any more than formerly, but it seemed to be more openly done. It was not an unusual thing of late for Mr. Swallow to come out and say, in his off-hand way, "Well, Mr. Burrill, I've got a matter I must talk over with you," and take him off to his room for an hour. I noticed, too, that he was sometimes sent to represent the firm before a referee, and that somehow everybody had become very particular about calling him "Mr." So I said, after a moment's silence,—

"Perhaps we might find such a place, Mr. Burrill."

"No, we can't: there isn't any," answered the old man, petulantly wheeling round in his chair. "But I'll tell you what we might do: we might take a lunch. I know a place. What do you say to next Saturday, if it is fair? We can take a holiday, and I will have a hamper packed. It won't be so bad, really."

The old man's face glowed with anticipation.

Of course I did not object. The fates were kind, and the weather was propitious. An evening ride up the river, a night at a hotel overlooking its placid waters, a tramp over the hills in the early morning, and we were hidden in a little glen whose sides were bright with blossoming laurel, while maple and hemlock almost met overhead, and a sparkling little stream fell down from a spring among the rocks above. There was a narrow open space between the laurels and the alders on its banks, where the sun looked in and the grass grew soft with a fringe of tender ferns around it. Here we spent our holiday.

The hamper was opened long before the sun reached the meridian, for our early walk had given us an appetite. Heavens, what a feast the good old man had provided! I knew the basket was well stocked, but had no idea of the luxuries it contained. I do not think I have ever tasted a better meal. We ate and drank and were merry. He had brought two small bottles of wine carefully packed in a wicker case, which he would trust to no hand but his own. How tenderly he drew them out and placed them at just the right angle in the sunshine! I am no connoisseur, having seldom tasted wine; but I shall never forget the glimmer of the sunshine through the purple juice. He said it was a royal wine, which ought never to have been dethroned; that it should be drunk at just blood-heat, that its generous warmth might the more easily mingle with the life-tide it enriched. How carefully he turned the bottles, now and then, shading them from the direct rays that they might not gather too much of their force! How tenderly he decanted one, reserving the other until the hour of departure! How like a ruby's heart the liquid glowed in the little shell-like glasses he had brought in a velvet-lined case! There was not enough to drink, —just a bit to sip as we discussed our dinner. It was even doubtful whether eye or palate felt most its delight. He told me what vintage it was, but I have forgotten. He had never tasted it before, he said, but had long promised himself this indulgence. Then he told me of little jaunts when he was but an office-boy and carried his bread and cheese in his pocket; how when he became a clerk he saved his pence all the year for a day or two in midsummer fields,—his only luxury. I did not wonder at the placid contentment of his age as I listened. And I too was content. This was not the country life I hated.

I think I had never been so happy before. Everything was so quiet; the sunlight through the leaves was so soft; the laurel-blossoms showed so fair through the tender sprays of the shooting hemlocks; the birds sang; the bees hummed, and the world was so far away! Words cannot tell my supreme content as I lit my cigar and lay back among the odorous ferns to smoke and dream.

"Did I ever tell you about my case?"

The voice seemed to come from very far away, but I roused myself to listen and reply. Indeed, it was no effort to do so. It was only passing from one dream to another.

"Your case? What do you mean?"

"Perhaps you did not know that I was an attorney?" The old man's face flushed red as he spoke.

"No, indeed," I answered. "Was it in the old country?"

"By no means," was the emphatic reply. "Small chance for one who starts as an office-boy there, even if he knows law enough for the wool-sack. True, there is a rumor of one that rose from the office-stool to the judge's bench; but that was a good while ago, and he found rich friends to push him. I used to dream of that sort of thing, and sometimes hoped for a little of it,—a barrister's gown, perhaps,—but it didn't come my way. I suppose I wasn't big enough to fill it. I studied hard, though, and learned the law,—the cases, you know,—so that there wasn't a barrister in my knowledge that didn't like to see my hand on a brief, if I do say it. Of course I got fair wages then; but I was only a clerk, and could hope for nothing else. That's why I came to America. I thought I could make a living in any country where the common law prevailed, and I didn't know—well, perhaps I was foolish. It's hard for a man that's been a clerk till past forty to be anything else afterwards, and I suppose I wasn't made for anything better."

The old man spoke regretfully, and fell to meditating when he ceased. To divert his attention from what seemed sorrowful recollections, I asked,—

"You have been with Mr. Gauge ever since you landed, haven't you?"

"Pretty nigh. I hadn't been here more than a fortnight when I set in with him."

"How did it happen?"

"Curiously enough, it came out of that same kind of cases he was telling us about,—what they called 'rendition cases,' you know,—about 'fugitives from service.' I didn't know anything about slavery, nor care anything about it either, as a fact. I hadn't any sort of sympathy with the negro, and didn't care anything about the Republic then. It was the legal relation of slavery that interested me. I didn't once suppose that the law supported and maintained the 'peculiar institution,' as it was called.

"I had a notion it was like what they call 'business' on the exchanges,—stocks, and produce, and petroleum, you know,—which is no more business than betting at a faro-table. Everybody knows it to be illegal, but it goes on year after year, covering billions of dollars in the aggregate, and claiming to be business while it actually *is* gambling. The law doesn't encourage nor protect it, and won't enforce that sort of contracts; but the law doesn't stop it, so that the best brain and nerve of the country, and about half its capital, is diverted from real business, legitimate production and healthful exchange, into speculation, which is the most pernicious form of gambling, until business has come to be at a discount, and our banks would rather back a gambler than a manufacturer.

"Now, I had an idea that this was something the way it was with slavery,—that the law winked at it rather than approved it. I don't know how I got this notion, I am sure. It was writ down in all the books plain enough, but somehow I didn't seem to sense it. It wasn't the *fact*, you see, but the *legality* of it that hurt me. I didn't care any

more about the 'nigger' than I did about the poor in London; but I could not realize that the law should actually make and keep him a 'nigger' or a slave, any more than I could think it possible that the law should openly declare that the poor should always remain poor. I was awful green, wasn't I?" he asked, with a quiet smile.

I told him I did not at all wonder at his feelings, as I had myself never been able to realize the fact to which he referred.

"I've often wondered," he rejoined, "what you youngsters thought about the matter. I suppose the generation that comes on a hundred years from now will really know more about slavery than you do, and probably understand its tendencies better. Well, I didn't care anything about the institution as a fact of anybody's life or a factor of any civilization; but I took a fancy to Mr. Gauge, don't you know, because I thought he was resenting the idea of the law being made the instrument of oppressing or degrading anybody. I heard him in one of those cases. He was a young man then, younger than I, slender, quiet, and very particular in his dress. There wasn't any dust on *his* broadcloth. He was as brave as a lion, though, and hadn't any hesitation about speaking his opinion. He didn't make much noise,—the fellows on the other side did the shouting in those cases,—but he never forgot what the law *ought* to be, in trying to find out what it was. He understood its tendencies, as well as its decisions. That is what makes him a great lawyer,—one of the greatest of his day,—though he never made a speech that anybody outside of the profession ever cared to listen to.

"I took a notion to him from the start,—thought he was the very man for me to 'tie to,' as you youngsters say. And so he was; and Mr. Swallow is another. One just supplements the other, so that they make the perfect firm,—the very ideal of a legal partnership,—though it isn't what I once hoped to see. I went to him and set in with him for a year. He was cautious,—always is, you know,—said I was just the man he wanted, but he wasn't able to pay what I was worth. Finally, it was agreed that I should have a certain share of what he received,—that was after I had been with him a number of months; and the terms were never changed, until Mr. Swallow came in, and then only to make it a little better for me."

"Why, Mr. Burrill!" I exclaimed, in surprise, "you don't mean to say you are a partner?"

"No," he answered, "I am not: I am simply employed for a share of the profits."

"But you said you had been admitted to the bar."

"Whether I said so or not, I was, and have as good a right to put 'Attorney and Counsellor at Law and Solicitor in Chancery' after my name as anybody that sports a gold-lettered sign on his door in Wall Street. You'll find my name on the roll, if you ever chance to look, though it has never been printed among the attorneys in the directory,—only Thomas H. Burrill, Clerk."

"But how does it happen that nobody knows it?"

"Well, you see, Mr. Gauge wanted me to be admitted and be his partner in fact. So as soon as I had declared my intention to become

a citizen—filed my first papers, you know—I was examined and admitted. In the very first case where my name appeared, the counsel on the other side raised the question of my admissibility. It was a new question then, and rather than delay the case to fight it we dissolved, and I went back to my clerkship again. I was duly admitted, though, and of course after I was fully naturalized the objection would not lie; but I never act as an attorney except now and then in an emergency. I suppose you thought I was tolerated inside the bar by courtesy, and many of the profession probably think so too. The judges and some of the older practitioners know better.”

“But you have never practised,—taken any cases, I mean,—except for the firm?”

“Well, no, not to *say* practice. I did have one case—Mr. Gauge calls it ‘Burrill’s case’ yet—that I thought a good deal of. Queer enough, it came out of those fugitive-slave cases. As I said, I never could understand the legal idea of slavery. Well, one day along about the close of the war a young fellow came in and stated a case to me while I was alone in the office, and I promised to take it. When Mr. Gauge and Mr. Swallow came in I laid it before them. It was a claim of title to certain real property in one of the Southern States, worth all the way from five to ten thousand dollars, according to circumstances. The claimant wanted Gauge & Swallow to advance the costs and prosecute the case for a contingent,—a share in the recovery, you know.

“It wasn’t a sure thing by any means, but Mr. Swallow was for taking it and running the risk, declaring it to be a ‘lovely case.’ I think he would have been willing to try it for nothing, just to get a chance to handle the questions it involved. But Mr. Gauge stood off. I’ve noticed he gets more and more cautious the older he grows. He said it would be a great expense, consume a deal of time, and it was very uncertain what would be the outcome. He was sorry for the claimants, but ‘G. & S.’ didn’t practise law for charity. I had become interested in the matter, and, besides that, I didn’t like the way he talked about it. I thought he meant to imply that I had no business to undertake it. So I said that if they would let me use the firm’s name for once, I would do the work and advance the funds myself.

“Oh, you needn’t be surprised. I haven’t been sharing with Mr. Gauge for thirty years not to have a nest-egg of my own. It wouldn’t have hurt me to lose the cost and travelling-expenses a dozen times over. They were willing enough to do this, and Mr. Swallow said that when I got it ready for trial he would go down and argue it for me.”

“What was the case?”

“It wasn’t ever reported,” said the old man, as a look of disappointment flitted over his face; “it wasn’t even tried. If it had been, Mr. Fountain, you wouldn’t ever have manifested surprise at my having been admitted to the bar. If that case had been tried and gone to the Supreme Court,—as it was sure to have done if it had come to trial,—it’s the simple truth, if I do say it, that it would have made my name familiar to the entire bar of the country. A lawyer would have been ashamed not to know of me. Instead of being a sort of silent partner then, the sign on our door would have read, ‘Gauge, Swallow & Bur-

rill.' It wasn't to be, though, and I suppose it's best. I'd have been glad to see it,—just once before I died. It's all I ever wanted,—for myself, that is."

"What was there remarkable about your case?" I asked, to bring him back from his regretful mood.

"Remarkable! About *my case!*" he exclaimed, quickly. "Why, there was everything remarkable about it. It contained more new questions, and harder and knottier ones, than ever came before a court at one time since judges took to wearing gowns. Why, sir, 'the rule in Shelley's case' wasn't a circumstance beside it for complexity, and the Dartmouth College case, the Chesapeake Canal case, the Dred Scott decision, the Legal Tender cases, and the Slaughter House cases, all put together, did not present as many nor as difficult constitutional questions as *my case!* Just think of that, sir! You ought to see the brief I made for the Supreme Court: I'll show it to you some time. I was sure it would go there, you see, and it would if I had not been a fool. Such a chance comes but once in a lifetime. But I was a fool, that is what I was,—a miserable, weak old fool!"

"How did it happen? You didn't get nonsuited, did you?"

"Nonsuited! Young man, I've a good mind to brain you for that! I believe I would if I were sure you had brain enough to feel the loss! Why, youngster, I was fifty-odd years old when I made that brief, and Gauge & Swallow's name was on the papers! And you talk about a non-suit!"

"I am sure I beg your pardon; I was only in fun," I ventured to say.

"Fun! Mr. Fountain, one would think you were from Boston. That is exactly the Boston idea of wit. Just let me give you a statement of the case,—a syllabus of it as it *ought* to have appeared in the Reports. I told you it grew out of slavery, and you will see how it enabled me to understand slavery as a legal fact—a mighty juridical force—as I never had before. This was the case:

"A, living in a slave State, sold B and her children (who were also his children) to C, who brought them to New York and manumitted them in 1857. In 1859, A died, bequeathing realty in the State of his residence to B and her children for their joint lives, with remainder to successive survivors. The statutes of the State forbade the manumission of slaves except by leave of court, and the heirs insisted that the sale to C was without consideration, in fraud of the statute, and the manumission in New York void as against the heirs. B and her children, being free persons of color, were also prohibited from entering the State under penalty of being sold into slavery, and consequently could not take actual possession—*possessio pedis*, you know—of the devised realty. Two years after—in 1861, that is—came on the war. In 1863 the State, then a part of the Confederacy, sold the lands for non-payment of taxes, and they were bought by the heirs, who also claimed the specific bequest to be invalid to pass title. After the close of the war, B and her children brought suit for possession.

"That was *my case!*" fairly shouted the old man. "What do you think of it?" he continued, with a vehemence that startled me. "Isn't

it just bristling with points? How it would have puzzled the big-wigs at Washington! There it is, an epitome of our political history,—slavery, freedom,—war, peace,—the Union, the Confederacy,—State rights and national supremacy,—every possible complexity of right and relation that our dual civilization and dual form of government could evolve, presented in one splendid, incomparable case!

"How I studied it! Lord love you, how I did study it! Every possible question that could arise in it I worked out and fortified with authorities. Heavens! what a sensation Mr. Swallow would have made before the Supreme Court of the United States with that brief! Of course I should have let him argue it, but my name would have been on the brief. 'Gauge & Swallow for the appellant, with brief by Mr. Burrill.' That's the way it would have appeared. And such a brief! Oh, I learned all about slavery as a legal fact in preparing that brief! The most astonishing legal fact the world ever knew, it was, too. It destroyed all the pride I had in the common law, all the confidence I might ever have had in *any* system of judicature as a safeguard of individual liberty. The idea is a delusion and a snare, a humbug, Mr. Fountain, a humbug! There was the law, the common law of England in its purity. Never was it more subtly and ably expounded than by the judges of those States. And there was slavery,—side by side with it,—not only tolerated, but regulated, enforced, and strengthened by it. It was horrible! I didn't care anything about the negro; but the law, my idol, don't you see! what I had always worshipped as the essence of right, that *this* should sustain and nourish the *wrong*! I didn't mind its failure to correct evils; but the sustentation of wrong!—that almost killed me! I felt neither anger towards the master nor pity for the slave. They were mere creatures of the law, and the law I had imagined so divine a thing,—it was a mere creature of popular impulse, collective inclination,—the willing agent of right or wrong as chance might determine!

"That is how I felt as I studied *my case*; but by and by I worked it all out, found the little thread, the golden thread that runs through all the law, is stronger than all the coarsely-knotted ligaments of human desire, and runs back to truth, to essential truth, absolute truth! I worked it all out and put it in my brief. Man! man! what a chance was lost, not for me only, but for the court, for the world, for the law! And all by my stupidity!"

The old man's excited volubility almost terrified me. I could understand something of his feeling, though. He had worshipped the law. The gown of the barrister had seemed to him the grandest decoration ever worn by a human being, unless it were a judge's wig. Modest, yet imaginative, he had longed, but never hoped, to be a practitioner. Naturally, he had accepted the self-glorification of the profession for literal fact. As his knowledge increased, this impression had been enhanced by constant study of legal works. This had been the passion of his life,—to read the law,—to know all that had been decided. Well might Theophilus Gauge, the young and ambitious lawyer, make a silent partner of this living depository of legal lore, whose brain was an ever-ready digest of cases.

Realizing more than ever the value of his good will, I asked, with a show of sympathy which was not entirely assumed,—

“But why was the case not tried, Mr. Burrill?”

“Because I was a fool!” he answered, angrily. “Served me right, too! I had no business to try to be anything but a clerk,—a drudge! Because—— But I will tell you all about it. You see, the case was ready to be set down for hearing, the parties had all been brought in, the pleadings made up, the depositions taken, and we were ready for trial. So I went down to bring it on if possible. It was a very busy time, and I was to get a day set and then telegraph for Mr. Swallow to come on. It was thought I would have no difficulty in this, considering the general willingness of the profession to oblige each other. I felt very nervous about it, however, chiefly because it was *my case*, I suppose, though it stood in the firm’s name.

“Well, on my arrival I found everything just the other way from what we expected. The gentlemen who appeared for the respondents were polite enough, but would not talk about the case. When I explained to them my position with regard to Mr. Swallow, they merely said they couldn’t help it. They would try, they said, when they had to, and, under the circumstances, could not grant any favors nor make any stipulations. If a lot of ungrateful ‘niggers’ chose to try and take from their old master’s family all that the war had left them, why, if that was law, they would have to submit, but they would not favor any such attempt, and I, of course, would not expect them to.

“This was a new view of the matter to me, who had thought our clients’ position a peculiarly meritorious one. It surprised and almost shocked me, but I soon found that everybody in that region had the same notion, which, after all, is not so unreasonable as it might seem. When I appealed to the court I found the judge just as little inclined to show favor as the counsel for the defence. So I stayed on, paying our witnesses from day to day. Meantime, it was intimated to me by the sheriff, who was one of those bluff men who are always ready to volunteer advice as to other people’s affairs, that it would be a good thing to associate one of the resident bar in the case. We intended to do so, of course, but I rather preferred to have Mr. Swallow make his own selection. However, as I got tired of staying and hoped we might get at least a continuance thereby, I began to think of adopting the suggestion. You see, I had given up all thought of a trial at that term.

“The question was who to retain. There was a member of the bar of that county to whom I had brought a letter of introduction from Mr. Gauge, who had been opposed to him in one of those old rendition cases. He was a small, precise man, with a long pointed beard just beginning to be streaked with gray, who wore white clothes,—for it was summer weather there, though a chilly spring-time here,—a green-underlined Panama hat, and black, knitted gloves, or mitts, I think they are called, which did not quite reach the ends of the fingers. He received me politely enough, but was, I thought, constrained almost to coldness. This, indeed, was the demeanor of the entire bar towards me. I had heard so much of their hospitality that I was surprised at

this, until I learned the feeling entertained for the business on which I came. Mr. Gauge had advised me to offer this Colonel Baylor a retainer as soon as I arrived; but, as it was *my* case and there seemed to be no hurry about the matter, I determined to bide my time and see whom I might prefer. As the days wore on, I noticed that Colonel Baylor, though evidently very highly esteemed by his brethren at the bar, did not seem to be overburdened with business, nor was he especially successful in what he had. Naturally, this fact did not incline me towards him, and I had about made up my mind to associate another, the real leader of the bar, one Mr. Faison, a man of most admirable qualities, when one morning I was astonished to hear him address the court as follows:

"If your Honor please, the case of *Holt et al. vs. Baylor* is a suit in equity, set down for hearing at this term. The action was brought against my brother Baylor at his own request. The petitioners, for whom I appear, are certain freedmen, late the property of Israel Holt, deceased, formerly a well-known citizen of this county. They allege a secret trust for their benefit between the said Holt and my brother Baylor, who was his residuary legatee. The averment is that in 1863 the said Holt, desiring to manumit and provide for the petitioners, and being unable to do so because of the war between the States then pending, bequeathed the petitioners to my brother Baylor, and made him also his residuary legatee, upon a secret trust and understanding that the residuum, amounting to several thousand dollars, should be applied to the liberation and maintenance of said petitioners, who therefore demand a declaration of the trust, and an accounting of the fund received under it.

"The answer of my brother Baylor admits these allegations. Indeed, it was upon his voluntary disclosure that the same were made. He admits, also, the receipt of the fund, its investment in Confederate securities, and its consequent entire loss on the downfall of that government. Certain questions will be raised, not by Colonel Baylor, but by counsel for the heirs of Holt, who have been made parties, as to the competency of the *cestuis que trust*. In case the court should sustain the petition, Colonel Baylor, it is understood, will offer propositions of settlement which will need to be approved by the court. The only doubt that can arise in regard to them, I imagine, will be that they are so liberal as to seem a positive wrong to Colonel Baylor and his family. Indeed, I desire to say that while I shall do my duty as the representative of the petitioners, whose ignorance makes them especially fit subjects for the protection of a court of equity, I do it solely at the instance of Colonel Baylor, whose course in the matter seems to me to be inspired by an overstrained sense of honor, which, though I cannot but admire, I most heartily regret.'

"There was a dead silence in the court. All eyes were turned upon the little man with the gray beard, who sat bolt upright in front of the judge, the ends of his white fingers showing through the black gloves as his hands lay crossed on the end of a file of papers resting on his knee. The fine line of his lip, showing under his moustache, was a little drawn, but there was no other evidence that he was at all con-

sconscious of the curious, admiring, and pitiful glances that were turned upon him from all sides.

"It has been deemed best," continued Mr. Faison, "to ask the court to send the case to a master, to report both upon the questions arising and the compromise offered by Colonel Baylor; and the counsel for the parties have agreed, on account of the peculiar character of this case, if it should be agreeable to the court and to him, to ask your Honor to name as such referee Mr. Thomas H. Burrill, of New York, who is in attendance upon our court, and, because of his entire freedom from bias, better fitted, perhaps, to define the equities of such a case than those reared under influences that might seem detrimental to the petitioners."

"I wish to say," he continued, with a gesture intended to forestall my declination, "that this is the especial wish of Colonel Baylor, as he desires the record to show beyond all possible cavil the perfect *bona fides* which we who are honored by his acquaintance would expect to characterize any act of his."

"There were evidences of approval amounting almost to applause as Mr. Faison sat down. I was never so surprised in my life. When I rose to decline there was a universal murmur of dissent, and both the judge and the counsel for the heirs urged me to accept."

"Of course, under these circumstances it would have been simple boorishness to persist in my declination. I heard the case. My report is on file in the court now, signed 'Burrill, Master.' The decree submitted by the referee was signed by the judge without alteration or amendment."

"What did I decide? What could one decide? Baylor was a fool; there is no doubt about that; but a man has an inalienable right to be a fool if he chooses. He believed in the Confederacy, first, last, and all the time; believes in it now, I think. He 'sold all that he had,' and followed it, too, like a true believer. Land and slaves he converted into Confederate bonds, not only as a matter of patriotic duty, but because he believed them to be good. As a result, the surrender left him a useless sword, a tattered uniform, a few law-books, and a house and lot in the village, in which his wife held a right of dower. In the face of these things, with a wife and three or four children to support, what do you suppose this man proposed to do,—nay, had already done, and only waited for the court to say it was enough for him to do? First, he acknowledged the secret trust. Nobody had suspected it. As a friend of Holt's, and his legal adviser, it was thought very natural that the decedent should leave him a bequest. He then insisted on being held responsible for the loss of the fund, and offered in discharge of this self-imposed liability—what do you suppose? The very house in which he lived,—practically all that he had,—free of his wife's dower, too, which she had voluntarily relinquished!"

"Nothing ever took away my breath like that! Of course I decided the points of law as he wished them. In fact, he was right; everybody felt that instinctively. So the transfer was made, and the man stripped himself of everything to perform his obligation to his dead friend,—even becoming a tenant at will in his own house! It

was wonderful! I said something of the kind to him after it was over.

"Well, you see," he answered, "Holt was very anxious about the children. He had some scruples, perhaps, about their being held as slaves by others,—they were his, you know,—and I agreed to do for them just as I thought he would if he had lived. It's been on my conscience ever since I knew the fund was irretrievably lost. Now I have done what I could. I don't think he would expect me to do more, and I could not in honor do less."

"But your family?" I suggested.

"They believe in *me*," he said, with a smile. "I can go to work now."

"Did you ever hear anything like it?"

"But what had that to do with *your case*?"

"*My case*! Well, you see, that was continued the very day my report was filed. I started home the day after, leaving authority for Baylor to act for us, and enclosing a check for five hundred dollars," said the old man, shamefacedly.

"I am sure that was handsome," I exclaimed, as heartily as I could, owing to a huskiness in my throat. The fact is, I was so proud of the old man that my eyes were filled with tears.

"It wasn't business," answered Burrill, meekly. "Mr. Gauge would never have slopped over in that way."

"I hope you never regretted it," I said.

"Oh, no; not so far as the money was concerned: the man deserved that. He acknowledged it like a gentleman, too, not like a beggar. Man, what a letter it was he wrote me!—

"SIR,—

"I have to acknowledge your letter with power of attorney to act in Rives vs. Southard according to discretion; also the very liberal draft you enclosed. I hope I may be able to justify your confidence.

"Sincerely yours,

"JOSEPH BAYLOR."

"That was all; not another word. Just as if five-hundred-dollar drafts were as common with him as corn-bread for breakfast! Well, I liked him all the better for it, though I never could have done it in his place. He set to work to earn his fee without loss of time, too; but it was a most unfortunate investment for me," Mr. Burrill added, with a sigh,—*"most unfortunate!"*

"How so?"

"How so? Why, the next I heard from him—it was less than a month afterwards—he wrote that, owing to the good impression I had made on the people of that region, he had been able to *compromise my case*! Think of it! Compromise a case like that! Did you ever hear of such an outrage?"

"I should think that would depend on the terms," I ventured to reply.

"Terms! Oh, they were good enough. He got three thousand

five hundred dollars and costs, which was no doubt a good deal more than our clients would have realized under execution. Besides that, he wrote that he had taken as part of the compromise an assignment of a claim which he thought would prove valuable. He suggested that, as our clients would probably prefer cash, we might take this as part of our fee and allow him to bring suit for it, without charge, in special acknowledgment of my liberality to him."

"And did it prove valuable?" I asked.

"Yes, it promises to. That assignment, you see, is the basis of the case *Burrill et al. vs. The Railroad Co.* Yes, it bids fair to yield *money* enough; but I would gladly have lost the whole recovery to have had *my case tried.*"

Albion W. Tourgee.

INCREDULITY.

YOU love my soul? It may be so;
But answer me, and speak the truth:
What spark can kindle passion's glow
Apart from youth?

If I were changed by time and care,
Grown old, and sorrow-wise, and cold,
With silver gleaming from my hair
In place of gold,

And all this lovely outward mask
Of bloom and freshness laid aside,
The while my soul, by toil and task
Thrice purified,

Strong in her immortality,
Made beautiful by love and trust,
Eager, as prisoned bird, to flee
Her house of dust,—

Oh, you—would you come sighing still,
In hope and fear, heart-gifts to bring?
A master kneeling to my will,
A servant who would fain be king?

And would you covet day by day
My lightest word, and look, and touch?
Ah, friend, forgive me if I say,
I doubt it much!

Mary Ainge De Vere.

MR. RUSKIN'S GUILD OF ST. GEORGE.

AT a time when the severe illness of Mr. Ruskin warns us that the master-critic of the day is not for long with us, the latest and perhaps the last report "of the Master of St. George's Guild" acquires exceptional interest. It suggests that the time is fitting for a brief review of Mr. Ruskin's interesting but comparatively little-known attempt at founding a society whose example might leaven the alleged moral rottenness of the age and help its intellectual poverty. People know more or less adequately that Ruskin did found such a society under the title "The Guild of St. George," and that a community of a few enthusiasts talked of beginning life under conditions much at variance with our every-day practice. But beyond this little is generally known. For the last dozen years it has been Mr. Ruskin's custom, as Master of the Guild, to report to its members the condition of his trust. The last report, which is dated January, 1886, since when none later has been issued so far as I know, is so despondent in tone that it is virtually a confession of failure, and presages the abandonment of one of the most curious socialistic schemes of the century, radically different from the many communistic experiments made in this country because essayed by Englishmen and men of more or less social culture. In this latest report, now before me, Mr. Ruskin says,—

"I thought when, following Carlyle's grander exhortation to the English landholders in 'Past and Present,' I put these thoughts (concerning the necessity of making a stand against the moral degradation of the English people) with reiterated and varied emphasis forward in connection with a definite scheme of action, at a time when for want of any care of teaching from their landlords the peasantry were far and wide allowing themselves to be betrayed into socialism, that at least a few wise and kindly-hearted Englishmen would have come forward to help me, and that in a year or two enough would have understood the design to justify me in the anticipations which at that time, having had no experience of the selfishness of my countrymen, I allowed to color with too great aspect of romance the earlier numbers of *Fors Clavigera*. That during the fifteen years which have now elapsed since it was begun, only two people of means—both my personal friends, Mrs. Talbot and Mr. Baker—should have come forward to help me, is, as I have said in the last issue of *Fors*, I well know in great part my own fault; but also amazing to me beyond anything I have read in history in its proof of the hard-heartedness incident to the pursuit of wealth. . . . More strangely still, they have held back from me in my endeavors to make useful to the British public the especial talents which that public credits me with. It is admitted that I know good pictures from bad, and that my explanations of them are interesting. It is admitted that I know good architecture from bad, and that my own drawings of it, and those executed under my directions by my pupils, are authoritative in their record of the beauty of buildings which are every hour being destroyed. I

offered to arrange a museum—and, if the means were given me, a series of museums—for the English people, in which, whether by cast, photograph, or skilled drawing, they should be shown examples of all the most beautiful art of the Christian world. I did enough to show what I meant, and to make its usefulness manifest. I may boldly say that every visitor, of whatever class, to the little Walkley Museum, taking any real interest in art, has acknowledged the interest and value even of the things collected in its single room. And yet year after year passes, and not a single reader or friend has thought it the least incumbent on them to help me to do more; and from the whole continent of America, which pirates all my books and disgraces me by base copies of the plates of them, I have never had a sixpence sent to help me in anything I wanted to do.

"Now, I will not stand this any more. To young people needing advice, and willing to take it, I remain as accessible as ever,—though it may often be impossible for me, in mere want of strength and time, to reply to their letters; but to the numbers of people who write to express their gratitude to me, I have only this one general word: send your gratitude in the form of pence, or do not trouble me with it; and to my personal friends, that it seems to me high time their affection should take that form also, as it is the only one by which they can also prove their respect."

In other parts of this report, to which I shall have occasion to recur, Mr. Ruskin proposes modifications of the original terms of membership to the Guild, which he seemingly hopes will attract new members; but such suggestions are thrown out with no apparent faith in their efficacy.

The public has heard less of the essential than of the minor and somewhat fantastic details of the St. George's Guild scheme. They have been used to regard Mr. Ruskin—when they thought of him as anything else than a great art-critic—as one who had lost all patience with the world, and who had gone utterly wrong in his views about the currency; he was childish about railways, machinery, and the sacred right of getting the best interest you could for your money; he was a hater of liberty and progress, yet positively no better than a communist if all that was said of this brotherhood of his were true. Let us see, then, what the members of the Guild of St. George really set out to do, and how far they went in the new path which Mr. Ruskin opened out for them. It was in the series of letters to workmen, issued under the title *Fors Clavigera*, that Mr. Ruskin, in 1874, first outlined his idea of a society or guild of persons willing to set an example to the rest of the world. He found that the world was in a bad way, but he was tired of railing; he had preached tearing down, but no one listened. When he proposed, in January, 1871, to destroy most of the railroads of England and all those of Wales, to destroy and rebuild the Houses of Parliament, to destroy and not rebuild a great many towns and cities,—among others, New York,—people had only laughed, and went on building more railways and abominations of brick and mortar. Instead of railing, he resolved to call together those who believed in him and show the world that people could live more happily without the

cheap-jack machinery of modern English life than with it. Art had disappeared from the life of the English peasant; Mr. Ruskin would bring it back. The English taste in literature was appalling; he had heard a girl of eleven years asking an elder who was reading the newspaper, "If you please, has anybody been hanged this week? or anything?" and he resolved to give at least a few children different aspirations. In his belief, selfishness, vanity, and practical atheism had wholly undermined the framework of the social order, degraded labor, and destroyed art. Those of his readers to whom acquiescence in such a state of things was intolerable were asked to form a guild, "the object of which is to be the health, wealth, and long life of the British nation," or, as he puts it elsewhere, "to buy or obtain by gift land in England, and thereon to train into the healthiest and most refined life possible as many Englishmen, Englishwomen, and English children as the land so possessed can maintain in comfort; to establish for them and their descendants a national store of continually augmenting wealth; and to organize the government of the persons and administration of the properties, under laws which shall be just to all and secure in their inviolable foundation on the law of God. The rents of such lands, although they will be required from the tenants as strictly as those of any other estates, will differ from common rents in being lowered instead of raised in proportion to every improvement made by the tenant; secondly, in that they will be used entirely for the benefit of the tenantry themselves, or better culture of the estates, no money being ever taken by the landlords unless they earn it by their own personal labor." Machinery is not rejected for work beyond human strength, such as the raising of water from great depths, etc. "Schools and museums," he continued, "always small and instantly serviceable, will be multiplying among the villages, youth after youth being instructed in the proper laws of justice, patriotism, and domestic happiness." There was to be no equality in St. George's domain, "no competitive examinations,"—here we come to the educational side of the scheme,—"but, contrariwise, absolute prohibition of all violent or strained effort—most of all envious or anxious effort—in every exercise of body and mind." Wordsworth's line, "We live by admiration, hope, and love," seems to represent Mr. Ruskin's mind when dealing with education: "All boys shall learn either to ride or sail; children shall learn, in the history of five cities,—Athens, Rome, Venice, Florence, and London,—so far as they can understand, what has been beautifully and bravely done; and they shall know the lives of the heroes and heroines in truth and naturalness; and shall be taught to remember the greatest of them on the days of their birth and death, so that the year shall have its full calendar of reverent Memory; and on every day part of their morning service shall be a song in honor of the hero whose birthday it is, and part of their evening service a song of triumph for the fair death of one whose death-day it is; and in their first learning of notes they shall be taught the great purpose of music, which is to say a thing which you mean deeply in the strongest and clearest possible way."

One cardinal feature of the plan was the keeping in view of the truth that manual labor—with tools, not machines—was of value to

the mind. The thought of the studious person was to be made wholesome by bodily toil, the toil of the laborer noble by elevated thought. Mr. Ruskin had no kind word for occupations incompatible with bodily labor: "scholars, painters, and musicians," he says, "may be advisedly kept on due pittance, to instruct and amuse the laborer at or after his work, provided the duty be severely restricted to those who have high special gifts of voice, touch, and imagination. No great arts were practised by any people, unless they were living contented lives, in pure air, out of the way of unsightly objects, and emancipated from unnecessary mechanical occupation." "The Guild was originally founded," he says, in the Master's Report for 1882, "with the intention of showing how much food-producing land might be recovered by well-applied labor from the barren or neglected districts of nominally cultivated countries. With this primary aim, two ultimate objects of wider range were connected: the leading one, to show what tone and degree of refined education could be given to persons maintaining themselves by agricultural labor; and the last, to convince some portion of the upper classes of society that such occupation was more honorable and consistent with higher thoughts and nobler pleasures than their at present favorite profession of war; and that the course of social movements must ultimately compel many to adopt it,—if willingly, then happily both for themselves and their dependants,—if resistingly, through much distress, and disturbance of all healthy relations between the master and paid laborer." Persons proposing to become members were asked to contribute a tithe of their income to the objects of the society, having the right to decide to which of four purposes the money was to be applied,—agricultural labor, or historical investigation, or mineralogical collection of St. George's Museum, or the purchase of manuscripts and objects of interest for St. George's Museum. Afterward the money obligations of members of the Guild were reduced to one per cent. of a member's income; and finally Mr. Ruskin in his latest report (1886) is willing to accept as members any persons "who will consent to our laws and subscribe five pounds a year and upwards." It was not expected that people who believed even deeply in the soundness of Mr. Ruskin's theories would abandon their offices, their shops, or their factories, to grow cabbages upon poor soil by day and discuss Florentine laws and Turner's sketches by night. Mr. Ruskin would have been glad to receive such converts, provided they were able to make good to the society's butcher and baker the monthly deficit after the cabbages had been sold; but even before the first canvas for members was over he had abandoned temporarily that feature of the scheme. In lieu of that he proposed to enroll some poor but worthy people whom the Guild would support while they (the beneficiaries) lived the life prescribed by Mr. Ruskin for the members: these fortunate persons would till the arid earth without strain or envious haste, in the manner prescribed by the Master, and would endeavor to live up to the fantastic programme laid out for them. Those who could not till the soil would make the best use of their time which the superintendent of the Guild's work could devise: they might make baskets, weave cloth, or do other work,—always, of course, without the use of other machinery than that used

two hundred years ago. Work within the Guild's domains—whether building, draining, weaving, or learning—would be done in the earnest, thorough, painstaking way which our ancestors are supposed to have followed. It was hopeless to suppose that the money received from the sale of the St. George's cabbages or cloth or baskets would suffice for the expenses of the community; and, besides buying the products of St. George's Guild at a valuation which ignored the quotations of the nearest market-town, the outside members, or associates, would make good the deficit month by month. Their reward was to be the joy of witnessing the transformation of simple John Thomas from a dull agricultural laborer into a man of ideas, of appreciation, who would find poetry in his cabbages and fill with enthusiasm over the "Stones of Venice;" John Thomas's children, under the influence of the Guild's teaching, would grow up firm believers in the divine right of kings and the dignity of manual labor; they would imbibe a horror of all that was inartistic, false, and cheap in the life of modern England. When the associates of the Guild saw these wonderful things, would they not feel like praising God and John Ruskin, and giving up their commonplace lives to join fortunes in all things with St. George's Guild?

The pictures which Mr. Ruskin drew from time to time in the pages of *Fors* of St. George's Guild in operation are full of charm to the poet whose dream is of Utopia, but the scheme was burdened with so many whimsical notions of the famous critic that but thirty-two persons were found to subscribe to the following curious creed drawn up by Mr. Ruskin, and to agree to devote a tithe of their incomes to the purposes of the Guild:

The following Creed, with the promises founded on it, must be written out in his or her own hand, and signed, by every person proposing themselves for a member of the Guild, and forwarded to the Master.

- I. I trust in the Living God, Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things and creatures visible and invisible.
I trust in the kindness of His law, and the goodness of His work.
And I will strive to love Him, and keep His law, and see His work, while I live.
- II. I trust in the nobleness of human nature, in the majesty of its faculties, the fulness of its mercy, and the joy of its love.
And I will strive to love my neighbor as myself, and, even if I cannot, will act as if I did.
- III. I will labor, with such strength and opportunity as God gives me, for my own daily bread; and all that my hand finds to do, I will do with my might.
- IV. I will not deceive, or cause to be deceived, any human being for my gain or pleasure; nor hurt, or cause to be hurt, any human being for my gain or pleasure; nor rob, or cause to be robbed, any human being for my gain or pleasure.
- V. I will not kill nor hurt any living creature needlessly, nor destroy any beautiful thing, but will strive to save and comfort all gentle life, and guard and perfect all natural beauty, upon the earth.
- VI. I will strive to raise my own body and soul daily into higher powers of duty and happiness; not in rivalry or contention with others, but for the help, delight, and honor of others, and for the joy and peace of my own life.
- VII. I will obey all the laws of my own country faithfully; and the orders of its monarch, and of all persons appointed to be in authority under its

monarch, so far as such laws or commands are consistent with what I suppose to be the law of God; and when they are not, or seem in any wise to need change, I will oppose them loyally and deliberately, not with malicious, concealed, or disorderly violence.

VIII. And with the same faithfulness, and under the limits of the same obedience, which I render to the laws of my country, and the commands of its rulers, I will obey the laws of the Society called of St. George, into which I am this day received; and the orders of its masters, and of all persons appointed to be in authority under its masters, so long as I remain a Companion, called of St. George.

The list of twenty of these thirty-two persons I find appended to one of the early reports: it is arranged alphabetically according to the Christian name as follows: Ada Hartnell, Annie Somerscales, Blanche Atkinson, Dora Lees, Egbert Rydings, Elizabeth Barnard, Fanny Falbot, Frances Colenso, George Allen, Henrietta Carey, Henry Larkin, John Fowler, John Morgan, Julia Firth, Rebecca Roberts, Robert Sommerville, Silvanus Wilkins, Susan Beever, William Sharman, and William Smithers.

For some years after the organization of the Guild none of the members gave land upon which the agricultural or educational features of the scheme could be tried, nor was the income derived from the members sufficient to do more than form the nucleus of a museum of art and mineralogy intended for the delectation and instruction of the St. George's community when it should be brought together. Many members who objected to giving a tithe of their incomes for the formation of an art collection according to Mr. Ruskin's taste withdrew. Then some land—twenty acres in extent—in Worcestershire was presented to the Guild by one of its members, Mr. George Baker, and, later, a small farm of thirteen acres in Derbyshire was bought and rechristened St. George's Farm. No member of the Guild was found who would consent to attempt life upon St. George's Farm for more than a few weeks at a time, and that part of the experiment was fraught with what Mr. Ruskin admits were ludicrous failures. Farm-laborers who could grow good cabbages proved to be deaf to the teachings of poetry and art; poets who saw much in the simple primrose were too taken up in its contemplation to find time for the cabbages. Nevertheless Mr. Ruskin has at no time given up this part of the scheme, and waits for devotees who believe equally in art and out-door labor. The farm is now used for raising vegetables sold in Sheffield, and other bits of property, including a moor near Barmouth in Wales, are leased. In Mr. Ruskin's own grounds at Coniston he has for the last few years been trying on barren land the experiments which he advises for the St. George's property; but though he says that he has made valuable land out of what was worthless, we are not told at what cost. Gradually the main work of the companions of St. George has come to be the collection of money and material for the little Walkley Museum at Sheffield, which the Guild founded, and the encouragement of such enterprises as seem especially deserving of support from such a society. Thus, Mr. Ruskin tells us that he found some years ago in the Isle of Man a native industry for women in spinning the wool of isle-bred sheep, but at so little remuneration that frequently infirm and aged

women were obliged to leave their cottages and their spinning-wheels to work in the mines, a condition of affairs which Ruskin does not hesitate to attribute to steam machinery. This industry has been organized by St. George's Guild, a water-mill built, and the custom of the well-wisher is asked for "honest thread made into honest cloth, dyed indelibly." In speaking of what he has done for this industry, Mr. Ruskin says,—

"It is to be carefully noted that machinery is only forbidden by the Guild where it supersedes healthy bodily exercise or the art and precision of manual labor in decorative work, but that the only permitted *motive power* of machinery is by natural force of wind or water (electricity perhaps not in the future refused), but steam absolutely refused, as a cruel and furious waste of fuel to do what every stream and breeze are ready to do costlessly. The moored river mill alone, invented by Belisarius fourteen hundred years ago, would do all the mechanical work ever required by a nation which either possessed its senses or could use its hands. Gunpowder and steam hammers are the toys of the insane and paralytic."

At present the members of the Guild do not exceed sixty in number, and, notwithstanding the small monetary obligation incurred by new members, Mr. Ruskin does not seem to hope for many more. The tone of the latest report to the members of the Guild is, as I have already said, so despondent as to lead one to believe that its chief spirit has no more faith in his own power to carry out the central purpose of the reform,—the elevation of manual labor by thought until rural occupations become essential to the well-being of intelligent persons. The following paragraphs from this report will show how far removed is Mr. Ruskin's tone from the enthusiasm with which he discussed the early plans of the Guild twelve or fifteen years ago :

"I have no progress to give account of last year in any direction of our main work ; no new land has been bought or given us ; and the funds in hand do not admit of our undertaking more than absolutely needful reparations and out-house enlargements of the Walkley Museum. . . . There are now in my hands at Brantwood, or lent to various schools, upwards of two thousand pounds' worth of drawings executed for the Guild by Mr. Murray, Mr. Alessandri, and Mr. Randall ; and at Oxford half as many more—capable now of being arranged in a permanently instructive gallery. I have no time, no strength of life now to lose in attempts at ornamental architecture ; and am going therefore to build a perfectly plain gallery, comfortably and safely warm and dry, in the pure air of Bewdley, where these drawings may at once be placed and described. We are at present, however, at the end of our disposable funds, and I have been obliged, to my great sorrow, to check for a time the beautiful work of Mr. Alessandri and Mr. Rooke. So it is for the British public to say whether they and I are to be of any further use to them or not. . . . If I receive no better help than hitherto, I shall place the drawings simply at the disposition of the trustees, and withdraw myself from further toil or concern in the matter."

Philip G. Hubert, Jr.

OUR MONTHLY GOSSIP

WITH READERS AND CORRESPONDENTS.

THE opinions of friends and neighbors as to a man's powers are rarely of any value. Sometimes they ridiculously overrate him and push some donkey forward into a conspicuous position where the length of his ears as defined against the background of the horizon may be accurately and publicly ascertained. But more frequently—and especially in the case of a man of real genius—they are inclined to undervalue one whom they have come to regard as one of themselves. That there should suddenly be a great booming of cannon and flying of colors in honor of Tompkins, for example, is quite in the ordinary course of nature, because Tompkins is a part of the great unknown outside world from which heroes are constantly emerging. But when your friend Jones, let us say, whom you thought you had fully weighed and measured, and whose mental tonnage you had placed rather below your own,—when Jones suddenly slips out of the narrow and crowded channels of every-day life into the wide, lonely sea of genius, you are likely to be surprised, you may even be a little displeased.

"The advent of genius," says the wise and witty Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table, "is like what florists style the breaking of a seedling tulip into what we may call high-caste colors,—ten thousand dingy flowers, then one with the divine streak; or, if you prefer it, like the coming up in old Jacob's garden of that most gentlemanly little fruit, the seckel pear, which I have sometimes seen in shop-windows. It is a surprise: there is nothing to account for it. All at once we find that twice two make *five*. Nature is fond of what are called 'gift enterprises.' This little book of life which she has given into the hands of its joint possessors is commonly one of the old story-books bound over again. Once only in a great while there is a stately poem in it, or its leaves are illuminated with the glories of art, or they enfold a draft for untold values signed by the millionfold millionaire old mother herself. But strangers are commonly the first to find the gift that came with the little book."

Montaigne tells us in his "Essays" that his attempt to become an author was laughed at in his own province, and even after he had won his fame he found that "at home he was obliged to purchase printers, while at a distance printers purchased him." Balzac's family were sarcastically indignant at his presuming to believe that he could write, and visited his first three failures with the usual exasperating "I—told—you—so." When Swift introduced Parnell to Lord Bolingbroke and to the world, he made this entry in his journal: "It is pleasant to see one who hardly passes for anything in Ireland make his way here with a little friendly forwarding." Daniel Webster in the very height of his fame, just after his famous Bunker Hill speech, took a run down to his native village, which he had not visited in so many years that he found himself quite unrecognized by his former cronies. Accosting an old friend of the Websters, he gradually, after due discussion of the weather and the crops, turned the conversation upon his own family. Thereupon his companion burst out into enthusi-

astic encomiums upon the virtues and abilities of Daniel's elder brother Ebenezer, who had died young and whose early death he fittingly deplored. Daniel slipped in a modest query as to whether there was not a brother named Dan. "He never was much account," said the old gentleman, with a shake of the head. "I believe he went up to Boston and became some kind of a lawyer or 'nother."

Andersen has allegorized his own forlorn and unappreciated youth in the story of the Ugly Duckling which turned out to be a swan. This story is a favorite with Bismarck. "I was an ugly duckling myself," he once told a friend: "my poor old mother never would believe that there was any good in me." Isaac Barrow's parents conceived so mean an opinion of his temper and parts when he was a boy at the Charterhouse School, that his father used to say, if it pleased God to take from him any of his children, he hoped it might be Isaac, the least promising. Adam Clarke's father was equally uncomplimentary to his own flesh and blood when he proclaimed his son to be "a grievous dunce." Sheridan's mother presented him to a new tutor as "an incorrigible dunce." Poe at West Point was a laughing-stock to his school-mates. Byron at Harrow was in no wise distinguished above his fellows. Napoleon and Wellington in their school-days were distinguished only for dulness. The mother of the latter must be added to our list of complimentary parents. Arthur was good for nothing, she thought, save as food for powder. Robert Clive's family were thoroughly disgusted with him by the time he was eighteen years old, his reputation for stupidity being then only equalled by his reputation for general wickedness, and, gladly accepting an Indian clerkship for him, they shipped him off to Madras, "to make a fortune or die of a yellow fever." Goldsmith, up to the time of the publication of "The Traveller," was looked upon as an idiot by almost all who knew him. Afterwards he was dubbed an inspired idiot. Burns was a dull boy, good only at athletic exercises. Sir Humphry Davy was by no means esteemed a brilliant boy. "While he was with me," says his teacher, David Gilbert, "I could not discern the faculties by which he was so much distinguished." And be sure that the good burghers of Stratford-on-Avon saw nothing in Will Shakespeare, the butcher's boy, but a wild harum-scarum scatterbrain whose only chance of future elevation lay in the chance open to all rogues on the gallows. Indeed, the Reverend Mr. —, who was pastor in the poet's birthplace in 1648, says there was another butcher's boy in the same town who was deemed more than an equal of Master Shakespeare in parts. This prodigy won the love of the gods, and died young.

Scott tells us in his "Diary" that for a time he was underrated by most of his companions, though subsequently getting forward and held a bold and clever fellow, contrary to the opinion of all who thought him a mere dreamer. "Dunce he is, and dunce he will remain," was the sentence passed upon him by Professor Dalzell at the Edinburgh University. The coldness of his critical friends at the outset of life had almost deterred him from poetical composition, as it afterwards caused him to throw aside the unfinished manuscript of "Waverley" to moulder away for eight years in his desk. The first sketch of his maiden effort at original verse, "The Lay of the Last Minstrel," he read over one evening after dinner to his friends Erskine and Crounston. They listened with just as much apparent attention as the laws of courtesy absolutely demanded, smoked their cigars, passed the claret, hemmed, drew a sigh of relief at the end of the first canto, and returned without a word of comment to the thread of conversation which Scott had broken into with his cold dash of poetry. He interpreted their silence as

unuttered condemnation, and threw the stanzas aside in disgust; nor was it until long after that they again saw the light.

James Thomson writing to his friend Mallet concerning a couplet in his "Summer" which the latter had criticised says, "Far from defending these two lines, I damn them to the lowest depth of the poetical Tophet prepared of old for Mitchell, Morris, Rook, Cook, Beckingham, and a long &c. Wherever I have evidence, or think I have evidence, which is the same thing, I'll be as obstinate as all the mules in Persia." The persons whom he kindly consigns to the "poetical Tophet" were his old friends in Scotland who had somewhat severely criticised his earlier productions. The first one on the list, Mr. Joseph Mitchell, had thus ungraciously acknowledged the receipt of perhaps his noblest composition, the "Winter" of the "Seasons":

Beauties and faults so thick lie scattered here,
Those I could read if these were not so near.

Which stung the poet to reply,—

Why all not faults, injurious Mitchell? Why
Appears one beauty to thy blasted eye?
Damnation worse than thine, if worse can be,
Is all I ask, and all I want, from thee!

As Mitchell literally had "a blasted eye," the poet, to avoid a personal reflection, subsequently altered the epithet to "blasting." Elsewhere he calls him the "planet-blasted Mitchell." Of another of these critic friends Thomson talks somewhat more calmly, though still with a sense of having been misappreciated and misunderstood. "Aikman's reflections on my writings are very good, but he does not in them regard the turn of my genius enough: should I alter my way, I would write poorly. I must choose what appears to me the most significant epithet, or I cannot with any heart proceed."

When Heine read his two stanzas "The Pine and the Palm" to a coterie which numbered such men as Fouqué, Schlegel, Chamisso, etc., they all burst into peals of inextinguishable laughter which wellnigh put him out of conceit with a poem whose fame is now world-wide. Addison advised Pope not to introduce his fairy mythology into "The Rape of the Lock." Wordsworth's friends all besought him to leave out of his volume of "Lyrical Ballads" the poem "We are Seven," assuring him that it would bring down upon him the laughter of all Britain. Pope had the pleasure of informing a friend who told him that there was a thing just out, called "An Essay on Man," which was most abominable stuff, without coherence or connection, that he had seen the "thing" before it went to press, since it was his own writing: upon which the astonished critic seized his hat "blushed, bowed, and took his leave forever."

H. S. F. asks for information in regard to the dog of Montargis.

This is the name under which the memory of a faithful hound has been preserved. The hound belonged to Aubrey de Montdidier, who during the reign of the French Charles V. was murdered in the forest of Bondy, or Bondi, near Paris. This dog attempted to defend him, and was left for dead by the assassin, but, recovering, made its way to the house of one of its master's friends, whom it succeeded in leading to the spot where the body was buried. No clue to the murderer could be found. But one day, as the friend was passing through the

Rue aux Ours, the dog, which had become his constant companion, flew at a man who proved to be the Chevalier de Macaire. He would have been strangled but for the interference of the passers-by. This strange conduct on the part of the dog, usually a good-natured animal, was repeated every time it met the chevalier, until suspicions began to be aroused. Macaire was known to have been an enemy of Montdidier, and to have uttered threats against him. The whole story came to the ears of Charles V., who ordered chevalier and dog into his presence. He decided the matter could be settled only by the ordeal of battle. The chevalier was to be armed with a club, the dog was to have an empty cask to retreat to. The singular combat took place, October 8, 1371, on the spot now known as the Island of St. Louis, then an open plain. It lasted so long that the man fainted from fatigue, and, on coming to, he confessed his crime. In the ruined castle of Montargis there is a representation of the combat sculptured in bas-relief over the mantel-piece of the great hall. It is through this bas-relief that the dog has received its name; but the animal had no other connection with the Montargis family.

In the year 1814 a great success was scored at one of the minor theatres in Paris by a melodrama called "The Forest of Bondi, or the Dog of Montargis" ("La Forêt de Bondi, ou le Chien de Montargis"), written by Guilbert de Pixérécourt. Its incidents bore only a remote resemblance to the original story, and its success was partly due to its sensational character, partly to the feats of the trained dog who took the leading character. Dog and play enjoyed similar triumphs in Germany and in England. In Dublin, after the play had run for several nights, it was withdrawn, owing to a strike for higher pay on the part of the dog's master. The audience were so infuriated at the change of programme that they gutted the theatre. This tumult is known in historic annals as the Dog-Row.

H. S. T. asks, "Who was Maid Marian?"

Maid Marian was the wife or mistress of Robin Hood. She does not belong, however, to the original cycle of Robin Hood ballads, but was a subsequent interpolation. Her name is mentioned in the ballad "Robin Hood's Golden Prize," and some account of her is given in the ballad "Maid Marian and Robin Hood," but these are of comparatively modern date, and there is no allusion to her in any of the other poems referring to the outlaw. Maid Marian, however, was one of the names given to the Queen or Lady of the May, and, as the May-day festival and the Robin Hood games were gradually merged into each other, it is easy to see how Maid Marian came to be looked upon as the consort of Robin Hood. In the ballad of "Maid Marian," already alluded to, she is represented as a simple village maiden beloved by Robin, who, when her lover was outlawed, donned male apparel and went to Sherwood Forest in quest of him. They met, and, neither recognizing the other, fought for some time before Robin's voice betrayed him. Then Marian called out to him who she was, and Robin escorted her to his camp amid great rejoicing. But this genealogy was not satisfactory to Arthur Munday, the dramatist, who, having in his two plays on the subject of Robin Hood ("Downfall" and "Death of Robert, Earl of Huntingdon") raised his hero to the peerage, felt the necessity of providing him with a suitable consort. He therefore makes her real name Matilda, gives her Robert Lord Fitz-Walter for her father, and King John himself for one of her lovers, but she repulses the king and flies with her other lover, the Earl of Huntingdon, to the greenwood, where he assumes the name of Robin Hood and she that of Maid Marian.

Mr. James Hunter, well known as the editor of the Supplement to Worcester's Dictionary, writes to the Gossip,—

"I knew the Poet Close,—a mean humbug. Palmerston made himself especially ridiculous by likening him to the poet Burns in the debate on his pension.

"I don't believe in the Basque origin of *Jingo*, for philological reasons. If it had been imported from these provinces it is much more likely to have been brought by the English army that served in the war of the Spanish Succession in the early years of the eighteenth century. The main strength of Charles III. lay in the Basque provinces, and his Spanish soldiers were mainly Basques. His English corps lay for long in the northeast of Spain, and Basques marched with them through Spain. But it is unsafe to speculate much about the origin of words unless you know something of their history. Halliwell's suggestion seems to me much more probable.

"I am not sure that your answer to query in regard to *Rabagas* is exhaustive. *Ragabash* has been a word in use in Scotland for centuries, and equivalent to *Ragamuffins*. It is generally applied to a class or as a noun of multitude."

J. S. McG. writes, "There was given, at a public reading in this city some years ago, a poem, announced as the 'Soliloquy of a Geologist:' it was a poem of six or eight verses, the last line of each verse, as I remember it, being 'When this ganoid curled its tail.'

"Can you tell where this poem may be found?"

W. C. M. asks, "Will you kindly tell me in your next 'Monthly Gossip' where I can find a poem entitled 'Fra Giacomo'? I do not know who wrote it."

THE ONE HUNDRED PRIZE QUESTIONS.

With the last two decades of the One Hundred Questions here submitted it might be as well to recall the terms of the prize contest which were announced in our February number, as follows:

"In order to add interest to this department of the Magazine, the managers have determined to start a series of one hundred questions, and to offer the following prizes to all who may wish to compete:

"To the person who answers the greatest number of questions most satisfactorily,—i.e., in the fullest, completest, and most intelligent manner . . .	\$100
To the second best	\$50
To the third best	\$25
To the fourth best	A copy of Lippincott's Biographical Dictionary.

"Twenty questions will be published in this department every month until the final tale is reached in our June number. Answers may be sent in any time between the present and June 20, when the competition closes. The names of the winners will be announced in our August number. Competitors may send in answers to the whole hundred in bulk, or may send them in from month to month, as they prefer.

"In order to avoid any suspicion of or temptation to favoritism, competitors will adopt a pseudonyme and send their real name in a sealed envelope marked

on the outside with the pseudonyme. These envelopes will not be opened until after the awards have been determined upon."

It would seem hardly necessary to explain that the winner is not required to answer all the questions. "The person who answers the greatest number most satisfactorily" will win the capital prize even if the greatest number answered be only ten, and so on with the other prizes. Further, the literary excellence of the individual answers will count for much in making the final award, so that it does not even follow that the person who answers the most questions, unless they are also answered most satisfactorily, will win the prize. Slouchy or semi-correct answers will be credited, of course, but will receive less marks than good answers. And the total number of marks will decide the question of the prize-winners.

81. Whence the phrase "A month's mind"?
82. What is the etymology of Mugwump, and when was the word first used in American politics?
83. What is the legend of the Palace of Sans Souci, and what amount of historic truth does it contain?
84. Whence does the court of Exchequer obtain its name?
85. Whence did Hawthorne obtain the hint for his story of "Wakefield"? and what monkish legend resembles it?
86. What were the O. P. riots?
87. Where are the two islands called respectively Jack-a-Dan and Kick-em-Jenny?
88. Who was called "Poet-laureate of the Bees"?
89. Why do brides wear orange-blossoms?
90. What is the story of the Kilkenny Cats?
91. Whence the expression "crocodile tears"?
92. What was the old fable of the origin of the barnacle goose?
93. Whence the slang word a "boom"?
94. Who originated the expression "the three R's"? and did he do it in jest or in earnest?
95. Which is the longest word in the English language?
96. What historical foundation is there for the poem "Barbara Frietchie"?
97. What is the origin of "news" as applied to newspapers?
98. Who was the Gabbon Saer?
99. When and where did envelopes originate?
100. Why are opals considered unlucky?

As several complaints have been made that the queries referring to our No-Name number are too difficult of solution, the Gossip trusts to simplify matters by publishing in alphabetical order the names of the anonymous authors who contributed, leaving it to the ingenuity of his correspondents to affix the names to the right articles:

H. H. Boyesen, Helen Gray Cone, Rebecca Harding Davis, Edgar Fawcett, Henry Harland (Sidney Lusk), Sidney Lanier, Joaquin Miller, Dr. S. Weir Mitchell, Mrs. S. M. B. Piatt, Henry D. Thoreau.

Nevertheless, it has been thought best, in view of many requests, that these ten questions be withdrawn entirely from the competition, leaving ninety questions instead of one hundred in the list.

BOOK-TALK.

"WHAT fools these mortals be!" says Puck, and, indeed, to a higher order of beings we can present no very heroic appearance. Dear brother reader, even you and I,—you and I who have such excellent reasons for holding ourselves better than our fellow-mortals,—even we are fools. The ceaseless gabble of our tongues must be amusing enough to angelic ears. We all talk nonsense, even when we are proudest of our intellectual powers. Some of us talk nonsense that we have heard from others, and then the world calls it common sense; some of us talk nonsense out of our own heads, and then the world is undecided whether we are geniuses or dunces, and talks an immense amount of additional nonsense before the point is determined. But to genius as to dunce the great lesson of life is that he knows nothing, that the only wisdom is a recognition of his ignorance. Shakespeare, Goethe, Dante, George Eliot,—these be great names to us little men. The greatest is only like St. Augustine, gathering a few shells on the sand, while the infinite, mysterious, fathomless ocean stretches unexplored and unexplorable before them. We speak reverently of their knowledge of the heart, of their insight into character. What does any poet or novelist of them all really know of the abysmal depths of personality? Sometimes when they paint a hero we may find, in this or that heroic quality, in this or that amiable weakness, a faint reflex of some characteristic we recognize in ourselves, or when they paint a scamp we may find a tolerably accurate representation of our neighbor. But then we know little about our neighbor, and less about ourselves.

"What a world this would be," says Christopher North, "were all its inhabitants to fiddle like Paganini, ride like Ducrow, discourse like Coleridge, and do everything else in a style of equal perfection!" Nay, good Christopher, the world would remain the same old dull commonplace world. Our standard would be raised, that is all. If every one rode like Ducrow, no one would stop a moment to look at Ducrow; if every one fiddled like Paganini, Paganini's fiddle would be complained of by the neighbors as a nuisance; if every one discoursed like Coleridge, Coleridge would be voted an intolerable bore. We give our admiration to intellectual performances that are rare and difficult. The moment the rarity and the difficulty disappear our admiration also disappears, we seek fresh idols to worship. If the average physical standard of the race were suddenly to be raised to—say ten feet, the noble Chang, who is now a Colossus, would become a dwarf. Political economists tell us that the discovery of a new gold-mine would in no wise increase the wealth of the world. If there were two dollars in circulation for every one at present, two dollars would buy no more than one dollar does now. See the different degrees of admiration accorded to men. In every village tavern you find political magnates who between "chaws" and drinks astonish the gaping by-standers with the magnitude of their knowledge as compared with the size of their heads. Canning used to say that the awe and admiration which a sixth-form boy excites from the members of lower classes are greater than he could ever again hope to obtain if he rose to be prime minister. Country lawyers, country doctors, country parsons, country school-

teachers, who have astonished their neighborhood without perceptibly impressing the outside world, settle the affairs of America, the disputes of foreign nations, literature, philosophy, and theology, over their own domestic hearth-stones, and many a simple mind has no doubt wondered whether Bismarck, Cleveland, Gladstone, or the Pope might not gain useful hints by hearkening to Paterfamilias. Well, the great historian, the great poet, the great statesman, the great philosopher, whose names are familiar words in our mouths, are as fallible and as foolish as Paterfamilias, as the sixth-form boy, as the village magnate, as you and I are. The intellectual feats that they perform only happen to be more difficult to the average man, that is all. But all is folly and vanity,—the gabble of fools. Yea, my brother. Let us go up on the house-tops with Carlyle and shout the great gospel of silence.

Or, rather, let us take to ourselves the lesson of humility in lieu of preaching it to others. Let us recognize that though all codes are temporary and may be revolutionized to-morrow, yet the higher code of to-day, retrograde even though it be in some aspects, faulty and foolish in all aspects as it may appear to the wiser generations that shall follow us, is the highest code that the human race has so far evolved out of chaos, and let us refrain from returning to chaos because of any faults and follies we may discern in it. Let us recognize, also, that, though there is no absolute greatness, there *is* relative greatness, that though in the face of the Infinite all men are puny, insignificant, and foolish, yet in a world where seven feet makes a giant it behooves us lesser men to look up to those who have surpassed the normal standard. Hero-worship is folly, but it is the sort of folly that helps us fools in our struggle after wisdom.

Let our humility extend still further. Let us recognize all workers who are above the ordinary grade of intelligence as in the vanguard of humanity, as pioneers of the future. It is fashionable to sneer at this or that popular novelist, to style him a purveyor of trash. Well, good reader, the popular novelist is a more valuable citizen than the man who does nothing, but only sneers. He is in some way—mysterious, it may be, to us—helpful to a number of excellent and well-meaning human beings. Even the nine days' wonder does good work within the limit of his nine days. Do not let us compare every one by the standard of Shakespeare, Dante, or George Eliot. The men of the hour are sufficient for the hour. Few, perhaps, of our living writers will survive for the future, but that need not deter the children of the present from recognizing their worth. A sliding scale is indispensable for correct judgment. It is significant how we instinctively adjust this sliding scale to all matters of every-day life. We call Jones or Robinson a brilliant conversationalist, when he only offers us a dim reflex of the books that, mayhap, we sneer at. We give the ready guerdon of a laugh to jests which would look poor enough in type. On the amateur stage we applaud performances which we would not tolerate before the real foot-lights.

We may almost discard our sliding scale, however, in the presence of such a man as Lowell. We may judge him by the highest human standard and not find many greater than he. "With the gift of song," says Lowell himself, "Carlyle would have been the greatest of epic poets since Homer." *Without* the gift of humor, paradoxical as this may seem, Lowell would have been the greatest of American poets. We distrust the inspiration of the Pythoness if we see a smile

upon her lips. There is something infernal, something Mephistophelian, about all humor, and in poetry at least we want Ormuzd divorced from Ahriman. To be sure, as it is, Lowell has written the greatest of all American poems, the Harvard Commemoration Ode, but that one poem hardly constitutes him the greatest of American poets when the bulk of his work is compared with, for instance, Walt Whitman's or Emerson's. "The Cathedral" is an even greater work, and would be a greater poem than the "Ode," but for its extreme cleverness,—but for the adroit and ingenious fancy which just plays upon the border of wit and would raise a smile if the theme were not so noble and so nobly treated. This cleverness has grown upon Lowell, somewhat to the detriment of his poetry. "Heartsease and Rue" (Houghton, Mifflin & Co.), which is his latest volume, contains much that is exquisite and delightful, it contains little great poetry. The best portions are not the serious work, not the portions marked "Friendship" and "Sentiment," not the tribute to Agassiz, nor the rhapsody of "Endymion," fine as these are, but such pieces of gay defiance, of half-hearted zeal, of unsated hunger, as "Credidimus Jovem Regnare," and "In the Half-Way House," which are grouped under the general head of "Humor and Satire;" and the lines which linger in the memory are such delicious *mots* as

Give the right man a solar myth,
And he'll confute the sun therewith,

or

For the goose of To-day still is Memory's swan.

The most characteristic poem in the volume—characteristic, that is, of Mr. Lowell's present mental attitude—is "The Optimist," in which he pictures the child of light halting from his hopes of the promised land and finding momentary comfort in the flesh-pots of Egypt.

Here, too, is Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes with a new volume of poems, entitled "Before the Curfew." May it be many years before that curfew tolls! How shall we judge him?—by the little test of to-day, or by the larger test of eternity? He would bear no comparison, of course, with the great poets, but in the company of the great jesters in verse, with Horace, Béranger, Hood, Thackeray, Praed, he could certainly move as an equal. His laugh is the purest, brightest, heartiest, and most genial that is heard to-day in America,—the laugh of a scholar, a gentleman, and a poet in a land where the professional humorist is a little too apt to become a mountebank.

And what shall we say of Amélie Rives, the young woman who has just been sent us from the South? Here are three of her short stories, "A Brother to Dragons," "The Farrier Lass o' Piping Peabworth," and "Nurse Crumpet tells the Story," bound together in a volume (Harper & Bros.). That she has passion, imagination, and poetical feeling, that she has a command of language which is occasionally exuberant, that she has the large frank utterance

(In her white Ideal

All statue-blind)

which is oftentimes unintelligible to the honest, well-meaning Philistine, and misinterpreted by the clever man of the world,—all these facts are patent enough to the reader. Is she to be a nine days' wonder, or will she take her place among

the masters? It is too early yet to say: her performance may fall below her promise. But, taking her performance at its present worth, we can recognize great qualities in it and some faults. The three stories collected in this volume are altogether the finest short stories that have appeared in American literature for years.

G. P. Putnam's Sons send two more volumes of their "Knickerbocker Nuggets" and two more of their "Story of the Nations" series. Mention has already been made in these columns of the beauty of the Nuggets in external appearance. Paper, press-work, and binding unite to make them a joy to the eye. The two volumes recently received are "The Vicar of Wakefield" by Oliver Goldsmith, and "Letters, Sentences, and Maxims" by Lord Chesterfield. The latter gives you in small compass a well-chosen selection from an author whose letters are pleasanter to dip into than to read through. The two recent additions to the "Story of the Nations" are "Ireland" by the Hon. Emily Lawless and "The Goths" by Henry Bradley. Mrs. Lawless writes her story succinctly and agreeably, with an evident effort to be fair and dispassionate, an effort so far successful that although you feel she is on her guard, it is some time before you realize that what she is guarding against is a natural predilection for the Anglo-Saxon. The engravings add much more to the interest than to the beauty of the book. Mr. Bradley's "Goths" is an excellent summary of one of the most extraordinary episodes in all history, the invasion of Southern Europe by a tribe of Norse barbarians from the shores of the Baltic, their early reverses and eventual success, their conquest of the great Roman Empire which had once been the terror of the world, the culminating period of their glory when one of their kings sat on the throne of the Cæsars and another ruled over Spain and Gaul, and the sudden and tragic collapse of the entire Gothic nation, leaving scarcely a wreck behind. As the first English work expressly treating of the history of the Goths, the book is doubly welcome.

Two excellent biographies (and, after you have lost your first youthful delight in fiction, there is no reading so charming as biography,—unless it be autobiography) are Prof. McMaster's "Benjamin Franklin" in Houghton, Mifflin & Co.'s series "American Men of Letters," and R. L. Stevenson's "Fleeming Jenkin." We all know the hero of the former book; the hero of the latter was probably unknown to most of us until Mr. Stevenson introduced him. But to all lovers of good literature he must henceforth remain a charmed figure. Jenkin filled the Chair of Engineering in the University of Edinburgh, and was a recognized authority on Magnetism and Electricity, especially as applied to submarine telegraphy. In his lifetime he was known merely to specialists, though his fame among them was European. "But Jenkin," says Mr. Stevenson, "was a man much more remarkable than the mere bulk or merit of his work approves him. It was in the world, in the commerce of friendship, by his brave attitude towards life, by his high moral value and unwearied intellectual effort, that he struck the minds of his contemporaries." Mr. Stevenson has succeeded in reproducing this personal charm on paper. Prof. McMaster's was in some ways an easier task than Mr. Stevenson's, yet it had its counterbalancing difficulty. He takes no unfamiliar figure; we all have a distinct picture of the hearty, honest, cynical philosopher, with his almost savage sincerity, his homely wit and wisdom, his worldliness, his lack of what are known as high ideals, and yet his strenuousness in squaring his life to such ideals as he had which might be commended to the imitation of many

a preacher of loftier doctrines. McMaster has not had an opportunity to "create the part," as actors say, but he puts life and vigor of his own into a familiar rôle. He is always picturesque, always entertaining, always vivid; his style, with its by no means disagreeable reminiscence of Macaulay, carries the reader along with it and makes him reach the end with regret.

The Reviewer has a number of new books upon his table about which he would gladly have said a few words. But space is limited and time presses; the Reviewer is mortal and subject to the limitations of time and space. He can therefore only make a general clearance of his table by acknowledging receipt of the following books: From Charles Scribner's Sons, "Society in Rome under the Cæsars," by William Ralph Inge, M.A., a book which obtained, and deserved, the "Hare Prize" at Cambridge in 1886, a really excellent survey of social life in one of the most interesting periods of all history. From Henry Holt & Co., "Uncle Sam at Home," by Harold Brydges, a frank and gossip sketch of Americans and Americanisms by an Englishman who has resided here long enough to have opinions, and who knows how to express them entertainingly; "Life of Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet," the founder of Deaf-Mute Instruction in America, by his son, Edward Miner Gallaudet; "The Causes of the French Revolution," by Richard Heath Dabney, a thoughtful and well-written historical study; "Pine and Palm," notable as the first novel by Moncure D. Conway, but not specially notable as a novel. From the author, "The Fire of God's Anger," by Rev. L. C. Baker, in which the reverend author continues those studies in eschatology which have raised the ire of his former fellow-members of the Presbyterian Church (but the Reviewer, unfortunately, is no theologian). Also from the author, "Girard's Will and Girard College Theology," by Richard B. Westbrook, D.D., who points out with evident frankness and sincerity the violation of the conditions of Girard's will which are permitted at Girard College (but the Reviewer can only repeat his former disclaimer). From Rufus C. Hartranft, "Some Dainty Poems," by Rev. Waldo Messaros, which, the Reviewer has been surprised to find, frequently justifies the apparent braggadocio of the title. From Rand, McNally & Co., two new volumes of their Globe Library of American Novels, "Calamity Row," by John R. Musick, and "A Puritan Lover," by Laura C. S. Fessenden. From Robert Clarke & Co., "Painting in Oil," a clever little manual for the use of students, by M. Louise McLaughlin. From G. P. Putnam's Sons, "The Life of George Washington Studied Anew," by Edward Everett Hale, an excellent biography for young people; "The Holy Child, or the Flight into Egypt," by Thomas E. Van Bibber, a poem that is rendered more or less valuable by half a dozen process reproductions of famous paintings; three new volumes of the "Questions of the Day" Series,—No. XLIII., "Slav or Saxon," a study of the growth and tendencies of Russian civilization, by Wm. D. Foulke, No. XLIV., "Literary Property and International Copyright," by George Haven Putnam, No. XLV., "The Old South and the New," by Wm. D. Kelley. From Lee & Shepard, "The Fortunes of the Faradays," another of Amanda M. Douglas's kindly but commonplace novels; "Vocal and Action Language Culture and Expression," by E. N. Kirby; "The Art of Projecting," an illustrated manual of experimentation in Physics, Chemistry, and Natural History with the Porte-Lumière and Magic Lantern, by Prof. A. E. Dolbear; Poems by David A. Wasson, a fine thinker, a true poet, who has not had justice done him in the latter capacity; "Natural Law in the Business World," by Henry Wood, full of common sense.

CURRENT NOTES.

A LETTER FROM MARION HARLAND.

[FAC SIMILE.]

I regard the Royal Baking Powder as the best manufacture and in the market, so far as I have any experience in the use of such compounds.

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Brooklyn Marion Harland,
Nov 30, 1887.

"THE cat loves fish, but she is loath to wet her feet." This is the proverb that Lady Macbeth alludes to when she upbraids her husband for irresolution :

Letting "I dare not" wait upon "I would,"
Like the poor cat in the adage.

Another old English proverb reminds you that "If you would have the hen's egg you must bear with her cackling," while the Portuguese say, "There's no catching trout with dry breeches." Of the same kind was the good woman's answer to her husband when he complained of the exciseman's gallantry : "Such things must be if we sell ale."

THE new edition of Chambers's "Encyclopædia," published by J. B. Lippincott Co., is winning golden opinions from the critics. It covers more ground than any other standard Encyclopædia, contains a greater number of articles on useful subjects, is succinct but always adequate, and for all practical purposes is the best Encyclopædia published. The articles are written at first hand by specialists, and are not compiled from other Encyclopædias by hack-writers. The American articles, of which there are a large number, were written in America, and a great part of the editorial work was performed in this country.

"THE darkest hour is just before dawn," is an old English proverb which expresses more poetically the homelier adage, "When things are at the worst they soonest mend," or "When bale is highest, boot is nighest," and finds an equivalent in other languages, as in French "By dint of going wrong all will come right," in Italian "Ill is the eve of well," in Persian "It is at the narrowest part of the defile that the valley begins to open," and in Hebrew "When the tale of bricks is doubled, Moses comes." That the nights, as a rule, are darkest just before dawn is doubtless true, for the moon has then reached far on to the western horizon, while the sun is still far below the eastern horizon.

"DEAD as Chelsea" signifies only dead so far as action and usefulness are concerned. Chelsea is the seat of the famous hospital for superannuated soldiers built by Sir Christopher Wren in the reign of Charles II. A person who "gets Chelsea"—in other words, obtains the benefit of the institution—is virtually dead to the service and to the world at large. The expression "Dead as Chelsea" is said to have been first made use of by a grenadier at Fontenoy on having his leg carried away by a cannon-ball.

A NUMBER of guesses have been sent in as to the authorship of the "No-Name" essays, poems, and stories in our May number. Henry James, Edgar Fawcett, Miss Fanny Courtenay Baylor, Amélie Rives, M. G. McClelland, F. Marion Crawford, and Captain Charles King have been suggested as the author of "The Old Adam," the preponderance of votes being in favor of Amélie Rives; "From Bacon to Beethoven" has been attributed to Mrs. Lucy C. Lillie, Sidney Lanier, and Henry D. Thoreau; "Ding-Dong" to Sidney Lanier and Helen Gray Cone; "Mr. Sonnenschein's Inheritance" to Henry Harland and H. H. Boyesen, Harland being the favorite; "The House of Hate" to Edgar Fawcett, though others, without committing themselves, have decided that it was written by a woman; "Among my Weeds" to Joaquin Miller and John Burroughs; "A Little Boy's Talk" to Dr. S. Weir Mitchell and Mrs. S. M. B. Piatt, the latter having a large majority of votes; "The Portrait and the Ghost" to Henry Harland; "Nebuchadnezzar's Wife" to Helen Gray Cone and R. H. Stoddard; "Old Delaware" (one guess only) to Rebecca Harding Davis.

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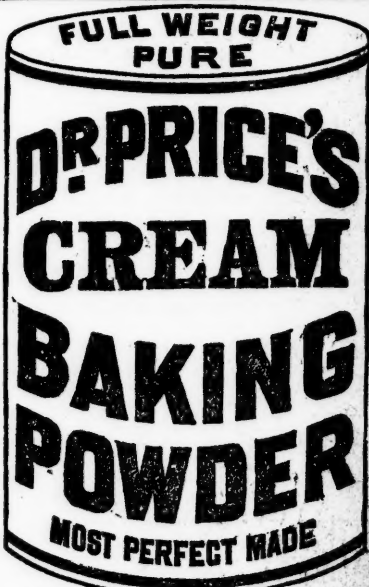
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